THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

CONTENTS FOR OCTOBER, 1915.

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N.B.—All the names and characters mentioned in the stories in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE are purely imaginary.

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Fur by Selfridge. *Photo, Elvin Neame.*

What kind of fur do you like best, O lady readers? If you don't know already, turn over the page and decide between the merits of the delightful peltry worn by some of our most charming actresses.

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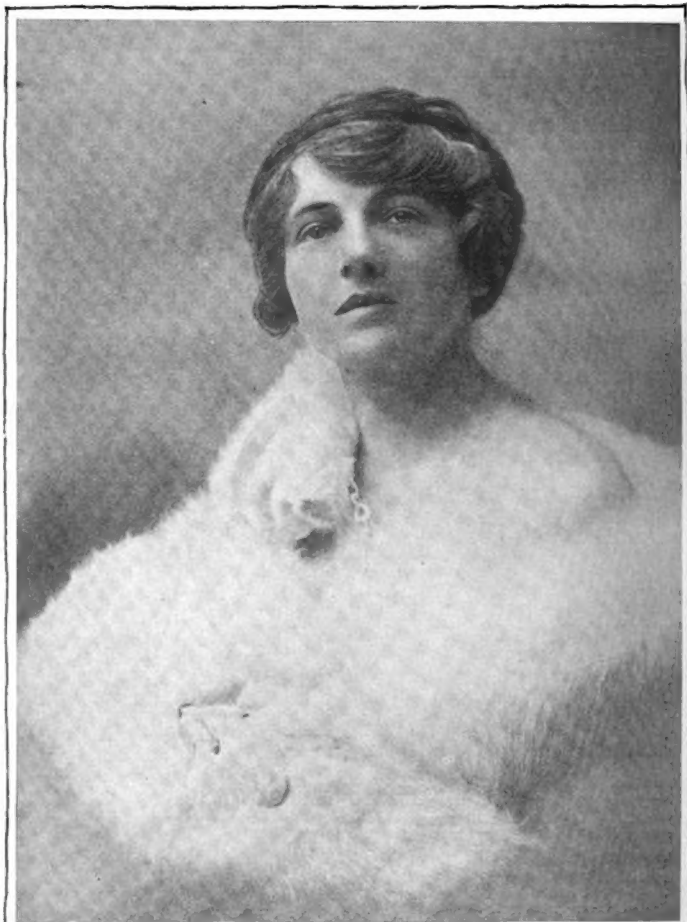

MISS BERYL NORMAN.

This beautiful young actress played with great success in "Betty," the spritely musical comedy produced at Daly's Theatre in the spring. When it comes to furs, there is nothing like snow-white fox in Miss Norman's opinion

Furs by Selfridge.

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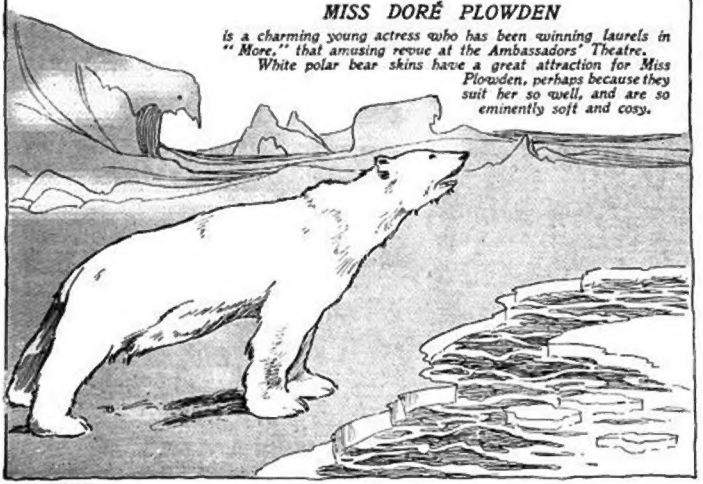
What's Your Favourite Fur?

Here are Some Chosen by Pretty and Popular Actresses, specially Photographed for the ROYAL by Elwin Neame.

MISS DORÉ PLOWDEN

is a charming young actress who has been winning laurels in "More," that amusing revue at the Ambassadors' Theatre. White polar bear skins have a great attraction for Miss Plowden, perhaps because they suit her so well, and are so eminently soft and cosy.



Fur by Selfridge.

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MISS AGNES GLYNNE

owns to a great admiration for seal musquash, and likes nothing better than a coat of this fur, with a skunk collar for preference.

Miss Glynne has lately been doing great things in "Gamblers All," that stirring play at Wyndham's Theatre.

Coat and Hat by Selfridge.

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MISS LILIAN BRAITHWAITE

has a great weakness for ermine, and nothing could be more delightful than her wide wrap stole and draped muff.

Miss Braithwaite is a great favourite with theatre-goers, and her performance in "The Green Flag" at the Criterion Theatre was a charming piece of work.

Photo by Bellingham.

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MISS MABELLE LUMLEY,

who was greatly admired in "More," the successful revue at the Ambassadors' Theatre, pins her faith to a stole and muff in strands of skunk fur.

Miss Lumley has played in Paris, America, and Australia, and has acted in many sketches with Mr. and Mrs. Seymour Hicks, and in musical comedy under Mr. George Edwardes.

Furs by Debenham.

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MISS ELLIS JEFFREYS

has played in many London successes, including "Diplomacy" and "The Flag-Lieutenant," and more recently in that amusing curtain-raiser, "Five Birds in a Cage," at the Haymarket.

Miss Jeffreys' choice in furs falls on a Manchurian sable stole and muff, trimmed with tails and claws.

Photo by Bellingham.

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The CHANCE of the GAME

By C. Randolph Lichfield.

"Bubble, bubble,
Toil and trouble."

I.

Stanton Eresby rose, and took a few hurried paces across the library, then swung back, looking at Crowder with impressive gravity. Eresby was one of those massive, genial men who retain the light-heartedness of their youth well beyond middle-age; it was, therefore, more significant than it would have been otherwise that he spoke with the most solemn emphasis and looked so anxious.

"Very well, then," he said. "I've told you enough for you to realise that my possession of that packet of papers makes all the difference possible to me. And for the time being I'm going to leave them in this safe, under your key. I wouldn't trust them to all the private secretaries in the world who were only private secretaries; but you're engaged to my girl, Reggie—you're practically my own son, and while I don't care to carry them about now Lambert knows I've got them—he'd give his eyes and his ears to destroy them!—I may want them. I'm off to the office now, for I've an appointment at four; then I'm going to clear up the last little point against Lambert, and I may want you to bring me those papers. Understand?"

"Yes," replied the young man eagerly, "but for heaven's sake tell me what you can prove against him."

"No," declared Eresby flatly. "I shall not do that. It would not be quite playing the game, and I've got to be all the more scrupulous because he's utterly without scruple. But you can guess it's pretty serious, for at this crisis, when he thought to round on me, buy the newspaper my hand and mind have controlled for half a generation, and run it in the interests of the other Party, I can *smash* him, his millions notwithstanding.

"By Jove! I can understand your not caring to carry them about with you, if it's as serious as that," exclaimed Crowder, and led the way to the safe, where Eresby deposited the precious packet of papers, he himself turning the key. "Safe enough now."

Eresby nodded, and moved towards the door.

"Well, I must be hurrying," he said alertly. "It's uncertain when I shall be back, so——what's that?—something under the carpet?"

"Piece of string, I think," Crowder murmured, feeling the slight ridge with his foot while he put his keys into his pocket. "Does Mrs. Eresby know you are going away?"

"Yes. I told her I mightn't be back before to-morrow night. And that reminds me. Leave word with her or Doreen when you go, where you'll be found if I want you. I don't fancy I shall, but I may. Good-bye."

When he had gone, driving off in a taxi-cab, Crowder went thoughtfully back to the library to resume his work. It was a tedious task, and after about an hour of it he stifled a yawn and fixed his eyes on a book Doreen Eresby had left on his table.

"I wish she'd come and fetch it," he said, "but I suppose she won't. Those things only happen in stories. However, it's open to me to take it to her. So here goes."

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It was a singular thing that on his way to the door, one of his feet descended just about where Eresby's had done earlier that afternoon.

"Now, you'd wonder how the deuce a piece of string could have got right under the carpet like that, wouldn't you?" he muttered, stopping and looking down. He stooped and felt the slight ridge with his fingers.

The string was long, and took a line towards the door. He traced it to the edge of the carpet close to the hinge-post, where, as it passed under the door into the hall, a couple of inches lay inconspicuously visible. It was not string at all, but a pliable silken cord, like the insulated wire of an electric bell.

Startled and perplexed, Crowder threw open the door, and traced the cord along the hall-passage to the head of the basement stairs, where it came to an end, having seemingly been cut.

Returning swiftly to the library, he traced it under the carpet to the fireplace. Cunningly hidden, it ran up the wall, and ended at a receiving instrument of a dictaphone fastened to the underside of the mantelshelf.

Crowder straightened himself, and let his breath go in a sharp whistle.

"Lambert!" he declared with conviction. "Lambert's got a spy among the servants! That's it. And the brute must have heard the old man remark about the string under the carpet, thought he was discovered, and made haste to cut it, so it could not be traced beyond the passage. . . . It's James or Wade. Lambert must have bribed one of them to eavesdrop. The beastly part of it is that he must have heard every word I said to Doreen when she was in here. How unspeakably rotten!"

II.

Crowder had scarcely sat down to dinner at a friend's club that evening before he was called to the telephone.

"Hullo?"

"Hullo! Is that Reggie? This is Doreen. There's a telegram from Dad to spoil your evening. I'm so sorry. He wants you to meet him—wait a moment, while I look again—3497 Shadford Road, West Brompton. Hadn't you better write it down? As near nine as possible, and take the Lambeth or Lambert papers with you. . . . Do you understand?"

"Yes," answered Crowder. "Are you in the hall?"

"Yes."

"Who brought you the telegram? Only mention the initial."

"W."

"Wade?"

"Yes."

"D'you think he's anywhere where he could overhear you?"

"I don't see him."

"When I ring off find out at once, will you, dear, where he and James are, and whether either of them could have heard you mention the Lambert papers? I shall be coming alone."

"You'll have to be quick then, because, as I told you, we're going to the Welholmes, and mother's nearly ready."

"In any case, wait there till I come," said Crowder authoritatively. "It's important, Doreen."

He ordered a cab, and returning to the dining-room only to make his apologies and adieux to his friend, hurried to the Eresbys' house.

Wade, the footman, opened the door, and his air was as calmly deferential as usual. Not by the tremor of an eyelid, so far as Crowder could see, did he betray any secret concern.

"In the drawing-room, sir," he answered, in reply to Crowder's inquiry for Doreen.

With the lack of formality customarily permitted him, Crowder went straight up.

"Mother's still dressing," said Doreen, with a mischievous smile.

"What about Wade?" he inquired in a hushed voice. "Where was he?"

"In the dining-room. James is out."

"D'you think Wade could have heard what you said?"

She shrugged her pretty, bare shoulders.

"Possibly. But what is the mystery, Reggie? You make my flesh creep."

"What was he doing in the dining-room, since he had no dinner to lay?"

"Oh, now, really!" she expostulated laughingly. "It isn't fair to ask a girl riddles when she's trying to look her best."

"Now!" exclaimed a small, rather angular woman, throwing open the door and hurrying in, attired in an exquisite dinner-gown. "My cor—— Oh, you—Reggie! I'd no idea you were here. In the excitement of the moment I nearly let you into a toilet secret! Now, Doreen, darling, *do* be quick. . . . Then you're not coming with us, Reggie? Only to the door? Don't say you've *more* work to do! My dear boy, you should *strike*, or charge overtime."

The moment they had departed, Crowder

hastened to the library. Switching on the light, he shut the door, and stuffed the corner of his handkerchief in the keyhole to guard against furtive watchers.

His mind was filled with suspicion, because it seemed unnatural to him that Eresby should have telegraphed when he might have telephoned more expeditiously, secretly, and certainly. Conversely, telegraphing afforded advantages to some other person, who could have written Eresby's name, but could not have imitated his voice.

Quite logically, Crowder reasoned that the telegram might be an attempt to obtain the Lambert papers, arising out of the information concerning them which had been acquired by means of the dictaphone, and he was determined not to fall into such a trap if he could help it. At the same time he was fully awake to the fact that Eresby might urgently require the papers, and have had his own reasons for telegraphing instead of telephoning.

"I wouldn't let him down over this business for the wealth of Midas," he muttured. "I think I'll risk it and take them."

But as he glanced towards the door he saw his handkerchief lying on the floor, and concluding it had been forced from the keyhole, possibly with a pencil inserted from the other side by somebody who wished to watch whether he went to the safe, which was almost directly opposite the door, he quickly decided to leave the papers where they were, but to go to the address given in the telegram and ascertain if Eresby wanted them.

In order, however, to throw a little dust in the eye that might be peeping through the keyhole, he crossed to the safe, and made a pretence of transferring something from it to an inner pocket of his coat.

Nobody was in sight when he returned to the hall, and though he looked back swiftly as he closed the front door behind him, he saw nothing further to excite his suspicions.

It was rather an awkward time of the evening to get a taxicab, and after walking to the main road and seeing none for hire, he ascertained that Shadford Road led out of Brompton Road, and boarded an omnibus.

In the gas-light 3497 Shadford Road appeared to Crowder to be one of those gloomily pretentious residences which inevitably become apartment houses, and the shabby-looking, slipper-footed elderly man who came to the door completed the impression.

"Is there a gentleman here named Eresby?" he inquired.

"There was, but I don't know whether he's still here," answered the man in a tired voice. "If you'll step inside I'll inquire."

Crowder entered the lofty passage-like hall, and without closing the door the man shuffled away to the head of the basement stairs, only to fall back a pace on the appearance of a small, grey-haired woman.

"Has the gentleman gone?" he asked her, loud enough for Crowder to hear.

"No, not yet," she replied, and gave Crowder a watery smile as she moved forward. "Will you please go straight up? William, show the way."

So, with his last suspicions of the telegram beginning to fade in his mind, Crowder was shown into the sitting-room on the second floor, and finding himself, as the door closed behind him, in the presence of a stranger, he bowed.

"Good-evening," he said. "I have come to see Mr. Eresby."

"Good-evening," answered the stranger, a very stout man, with a large, fleshy face, rising from an armchair and jerking down his waistcoat with a nervous air that did not escape Crowder. "He'll be here in a moment; he's in the next room. I'll just rap on the wall to let him know you've come."

With a restraining gesture Crowder took a step to intercept him. The stranger's appearance and air somehow conveyed to his mind that Eresby was nowhere in the house.

"Please," he said pleasantly, "inform him that I have *not* brought the papers, as I suspected a trap."

The man's prominent eyes dilated with a look of angry surprise, and he paused for a moment; then, shaking his head, he rapped on the wall.

"Better tell him yourself," he responded.

Crowder laughed, and faced round to the door. Now all doubt was dispelled from his mind, he could enjoy the situation of which he felt the master.

"I haven't the pleasure of knowing your name," he said graciously, as the man turned to him again, "but I shall not forget your face."

The stranger flushed angrily, and was just about to speak when the door opened, and another man came into the room. He also was big, but less fleshy and more active, with a short black beard. He entered quickly, and fixing a pair of dark, eager eyes on Crowder, shut the door.

"I am here to see Mr. Eresby," said Crowder with a slightly mocking bow.

Crowder . . . bending a knee without mercy on Blackbeard's chest . . . had just time enough to snatch the packet and fling it far to the back of the hall before the footman pounced upon him. It skimmed through the air and fell at the feet of a maid-servant.

[*Page 494, col. 1.*]

"I am Mr. Eresby," answered Blackbeard with a promptness and assurance that made the young man gasp.

But quickly recovering his *sang-froid*, he bowed again.

"I see—of course. Decidedly clever," he observed, speaking in a rapid, staccato way. "Your friend takes rooms, and says he's expecting Mr. Eresby; you arrive as Mr. Eresby, and say you're expecting me, and I'm to be shown straight up. Thus you deceive the old man and woman downstairs, so that their obvious innocence may deceive me. Well, Mr. Eresby, whose beard is so palpably false, permit me to say I have not obeyed your instructions to bring the papers. And let me add a word of warning. So far this affair might possibly pass as a practical joke, but if it goes further, you'll find you've struck a snag, a hornet's nest, and a host of other things that will greatly annoy you."

Blackbeard remained silent for a moment, eyeing Crowder with a coldly calculating stare. Then he turned to the other man and shivered.

"Strikes chilly in here," he remarked untruthfully.

"The window's open," the other replied, and moved behind Crowder as if to close it.

Glancing suspiciously over his shoulder, Crowder stepped aside quickly. He thus escaped much of the force with which Blackbeard rushed at him. Otherwise he would have been flung into the fat man's arms. As he reeled away he caught Blackbeard a smart blow in the face, driving him heavily against the table, but before he could recover his balance enough to swing towards the door, the fat man flung an arm round his neck, and seizing him by one wrist, crushed a fat knee into the small of his back, almost wrenching him off his feet.

Then came Blackbeard fiercely, eyes aflame, breathing through his teeth, and viciously slapping Crowder in the face with an open hand, caught him by his disengaged arm. A moment more and they had forced him down upon the sofa.

He fought them wrathfully with hands and feet, but they bent too close for his blows to be effective, and before he could draw breath enough to shout, they had him silenced with a gag.

"Now, get the papers and have done with the fool," hissed Blackbeard, and pressing a knee on Crowder's chest, began searching the pockets of his coat and dinner-jacket.

Exhausted, and realising the futility of further resistance, Crowder ceased to struggle. Had their methods been less brutally rough, indeed, he could have laughed at them.

"Don't say he hasn't got them?" demanded the fat man, who, seated on Crowder's knees, watched his companion's excited search eagerly.

"I don't believe he has," answered Blackbeard blankly, going through the pockets again. "No," he exclaimed, and fell back a pace. "Swine! What could he have done with them?"

"Are you sure the fellow said he'd got them?" the fat man asked in a disappointed tone, as he rose.

As quickly as the thought occurred to him, Crowder threw his legs from the sofa, and starting to his feet, tore the gag from his mouth. But before he could utter a sound, Blackbeard leapt at him, flinging him back. His head struck the wall behind him with a dull thud, and he collapsed upon the sofa again, stunned. . .

Slowly his numbed brain became conscious of movements, then all was dark, still and silent. Making a sluggish effort to rise and consider his surroundings, he rolled, and powerless to save himself, fell heavily from the sofa to the floor, for his ankles were bound and his hands tied behind his back.

He lay with his face on the dusty-smelling carpet while he shaped his thoughts; then, with much difficulty getting on to his knees, he hitched a shoulder under the table, and raising it, dropped it, thus knocking heavily upon the floor.

No one, however, seemed to hear him, and by degrees he got to the door. Back turned to it, he grasped the handle between his hands. The door was locked, and the key was not inside.

Wishing to find the bell, he edged aside, and by rubbing his back up and down the wall close to the frame of the door, he succeeded after a time in switching on the light, which showed him the bell-push beside the fireplace.

With a great deal of trouble he got to it and rang it. While he stood there, a finger pressed determinedly on the button, he glanced down and saw his key-chain hanging loose from his hip, and it struck him like a blow that the men had gone off with his bunch of keys containing the key of the safe. With that and Wade to admit them to the house, they could get the papers, if they could actuate the combination lock.

He let go the bell, and began straining at his bonds excitedly.

Just then somebody came knocking at the door and wrenching the handle.

"Come in! Make haste and release me," shouted Crowder. "Those thieves——"

"What's the matter?" demanded the voice of the man who had admitted him to the house. "Who's in there? Why don't you unlock the door?"

"I can't: I'm tied up and there's no key. Force it. Get a chopper, coal-hammer—anything, only be quick! . . . Don't be a fool, man. Get on to it! It's vitally important."

"All right! Wait a minute! There's a key upstairs that'll do it."

"Quickly!" exclaimed Crowder at length, hearing a key pushed into the lock of the door and turned. Then the door was opened timidly and the landlord of the house looked in at him warily. "Come and cut these bonds. Those men are thieves—have robbed me."

With a frightened air the man entered, and almost at his heels his wife came hastening, volubly asking questions in astonishment.

"Why, mercy on me!" she exclaimed, as Crowder briefly sketched the facts to her, "I had my suspicions of that Mr. Walters. He only came in this afternoon, and said he'd fetch his luggage in the morning. He was so particular we'd got no other lodgers for the present, and my husband and I lived in the basement. It seemed to be that decided him."

"I can't stop to listen," declared Crowder, darting for his battered hat the instant his ankles were free. "I've not a moment to lose."

There was not a taxi-cab among the vehicles in sight, and running eastward along the road he wondered what would be the most expeditious thing to do. Doreen was dining out at a house within fifteen minutes' distance of her home. Should he telephone to her to return at once, picking up a policeman on her way?

He would have to look up the Welholmes' number in the telephone directory, and get through and wait while Doreen was fetched to the instrument, and give her some brief explanation. How long might it not take? And to save time——

A fareless taxi-cab came rolling up behind him as he ran, and he stopped it.

"Keep out of traffic all you can," he shouted to the driver as he jumped in. "A sovereign if we're in time!"

After all, he reflected hopefully, the two men could scarcely have found any quicker means of covering the distance than he had, so their advantage in time was probably no more than the fifteen or twenty minutes he had started after them.

Possibly they were still on the road, and when they reached the house there would be some delay, for Wade would require some explanation, then persuasion, and even threats, perhaps, before he would admit them to the library. It was upon such delays to them or to himself that everything at stake depended.

He soon became aware that the driver of the cab was either very reckless or incapable. Twice during the first five minutes he nearly brought about an accident, and Crowder was kept on tenterhooks by the way the cab cut corners and rushed at people crossing the roads.

He beat his hands on his knees in his exasperation, and vowed loudly he would be too late. Then suddenly the brakes began to grind and a policeman stepped into the road before them with arm commandingly upraised.

Without a moment's hesitation, Crowder snatched a few coins from a pocket and dumped them on the seat, then opening the offside door he slipped out and ran as the cab drew up beside the policeman.

He ran down a side street and issued into a square where he knew there was a cab-rank. But the rank was deserted; there was not a cab in sight. He ran on, and after a minute saw a taxicab turn out into the road after leaving a fare at a house. He raced and overtook it, and between his gasps he made the driver understand his wishes. Drunkenly he scrambled in and the cab set off.

Down the quiet street it glided swiftly, then swung into the main road and began threading its way through the traffic like a water-fly among rushes.

Strained to the highest pitch of excitement, Crowder sat looking out right and left, noting every familiar point that marked a stage of the journey with ever-increasing anxiety. If he was not in time, whatever would he say to Eresby? For the papers would certainly be destroyed before the police could lay the thieves by the heels, even though Wade might be induced to say who they were; nor would it save Eresby if all three men confessed to having been employed by Lambert to get the papers. Lambert might retort there never were such papers and Eresby had concocted the whole affair to compromise him by implication.

The nearer Crowder approached the Eresbys' house the less hopeful he became. He leant forward, peering ahead, as the car wheeled round a corner and advanced towards the house.

Half the distance away came a taxi-cab which possibly contained the two men gloating over the thought of the rich reward Lambert would hand them for the stolen papers.

Crowder almost fancied he saw the men's faces as the two vehicles passed. He leant out of the window in great haste, and tried to read the number of the cab, but could not, and, drawing back, he threw open the door.

"Come with me," he cried in a hoarse voice to the driver, as the cab slowed to a stop and he sprang out. "I may want you. I'll make it worth your while. There are thieves——"

He did not finish, for as he trod the bottom step the front door was opened cautiously, and Wade looked out.

Crowder dashed forward, and, forcing him aside, rushed at Blackbeard, who stood buttoning up his coat, in readiness for flight.

They fell together, and for a moment or two fought like madmen, Wade and the cabman merely looking on. The fat man was not present. By a sudden, adroit movement, Crowder obtained the upper hand, and bending a knee without mercy on Blackbeard's chest, stripped open the thief's coat to get the precious packet of papers he had glimpsed. He had just time enough to snatch the packet and fling it far to the back of the hall before the footman pounced upon him. It skimmed through the air, and fell at the feet of a maid-servant who came running up from the basement, attracted by the noise of the struggle.

"Pick it up, Weybourne!" bawled Crowder wildly. "Keep it! Keep it!"

"Give it to me!" roared Blackbeard, scrambling to his feet, as Wade dragged Crowder away.

She bent for it, but Blackbeard swept her away, sending her reeling and screaming against a wall. He got the packet and swung away with it.

But the front door banged, and the cabman barred his escape.

"No, you don't!" cried the Jehu. "I do know *that* can't be right. With the butler on your side and the young woman on my fare's side, I was fashed to know wrong from right, but that settles it, for no honest man would treat a woman so."

"Hang on to him, cabby!" shouted Crowder, throwing Wade down.

"Out of the way!" Blackbeard commanded sharply, moving forward.

"That packet belongs to the owner of this house! Don't let him go!" yelled Crowder, who had all he could do to hold Wade down. "Weybourne! Weybourne! Get on to the telephone! Get the police—fire station, anything, so long as you get it quick!"

As the girl ran forward to obey, Blackbeard sprang at the cabman, aiming a heavy blow at his face. The cabman was quick enough to dodge the blow, however, and, ducking his head, charged Blackbeard.

They fell in a heap, a tangle of agitated arms and legs, almost at the maid's feet.

Frantically she rang the telephone.

"Hold him, cabby, hold him!" shouted Crowder encouragingly, bending a knee on Wade's neck. "I'll help you in a minute!"

But as he spoke Wade threw him off, and scrambling to his feet, staggered across the hall to assist Blackbeard.

Crowder's very haste was his undoing, for, dashing after Wade, he caught his foot in a crumpled rug and fell heavily, striking his head with a force that dazed him utterly for the moment.

When his mind cleared, the cabman was picking himself up from the foot of the stairs, and Wade and Blackbeard were recoiling from the front door, where Eresby himself stood barring their way.

"Telephone for the police!" commanded Eresby, with an imperious gesture to the maid, as the two men moved upon him threateningly, but were seized from behind by Crowder and the cabman.

"She has!" cried Crowder.

Eresby shot the bolt of the door behind him, and threw his own weight into the struggle. It was the makeweight, and turned the scales.

Meantime, the fat man, waiting anxiously in a side street for Blackbeard, knew nothing of what was happening, though the cab standing before the house gave him furiously to think; and when a second cab rolled up and two policemen hastily alighted, he merely divined there was trouble afoot, and melted away into the night. Trouble, however, has a way of catching up with people, and it came upon the fat man the following afternoon as he was leaving London for the country.

My Lady Beautiful

THE CARE AND PRESERVATION OF THE FIGURE.

By Mary Marsh.

A good figure is a most important asset of a woman, and yet few women take any pains to improve themselves in this direction. In the following article a well-known beauty expert deals with the woes of the too stout and the too thin, and holds out a helping hand to both.

"It is an astonishing fact that one so often comes across women who, although they take an intense interest in their personal appearance, and are willing to spend a small fortune upon their clothes, show comparatively little or no concern about the all-important question of preserving their figures," said the Beauty Professor a trifle pompously.

"Yet, as everyone will agree, nothing is more essential to an attractive appearance than a lithe, slender figure and a graceful carriage, attributes that, without doubt, keep a woman young and attractive long after the first bloom of beauty has faded and disappeared."

The Girl rose slightly in her seat, so as to get a reflection of her pretty face in the mirror opposite. The movement was not lost on her instructor, who continued:

"Still the fact remains, that while dozens of Beauty Doctors are making small fortunes out of face-massage, complexion creams, and lotions, the large majority of their patients studiously ignore or refuse to recognise that all their efforts to achieve personal beauty are of little or no avail if they allow their bodies to become gross and fat, or thin and emaciated, their shoulders round and hunched with a stoop, and their throats disfigured with great hollows, while their chests are flat and contracted."

"I know I'm fat, but I don't think I'm *gross!*" said the Girl. "Even you can hardly accuse me of that."

"I spoke generally," said the Specialist, "and continuing to speak generally I say that all these are defects which can easily be prevented and remedied by the amateur who works at home—provided always that she is really in earnest, and is prepared to devote both time and trouble to effecting a cure.

"Take, for instance, excessive stoutness, evidently a bugbear in your case, and certainly a trouble to a great many women, who, although they may be willing to throw away any amount of money buying chemists' nostrums or herbal mixtures alleged to make the fat thin, cry out in horror at the idea of daily exercises or a curtailment of their diet. There is nothing that works such wonders in

A good flesh-reducing exercise is to raise one foot after another very quickly in a fast trotting movement, chest well thrown out, and hands resting on the hips.

reducing flesh as simple bedroom exercises persisted in day in day out."

"I'll do bedroom exercises when my weight tops 12 stone," said the Girl, "and not before then."

"Still, the great thing to remember is that 'prevention is better than cure,'" continued the Professor, "and the woman who is in earnest concerning the cultivation of a graceful figure cannot begin too young."

"Well, I suppose you'd better tell me what to do," the Girl said grudgingly. "It will save trouble."

"Perhaps the most beneficial thing ever invented for the reduction of fat is the trotting exercise, advocated and introduced by a famous Beauty Doctor, who, by means of it, has managed to rid his patients of pounds of superfluous flesh, bringing even the stoutest and most bulky back to normal weight by this means. This particular exercise must be done for three minutes every morning directly after one's bath, and repeated, if possible, for three minutes before getting into bed at night."

"How do you do it?" asked the Girl.

"The right way to set to work is to stand erect, with the chest well thrown out, the head up, and the hands resting lightly upon the hips; then raise one foot after another very very lightly and quickly in a fast trotting movement. This helps to free all the muscles of fat, and to make the limbs supple and the flesh firm instead of flabby.

"Not only does this exercise reduce the whole weight of the body, but it does marvels in taking fat off the hips and the waist, though patients must not expect results all in a minute, for the exercise must be persisted in day in day out for twelve months or more. By that time the hips will be found to have been reduced to the slenderest proportions, and the measurement of the abdomen so decreased that the patient will be well recompensed for the slight trouble and inconvenience entailed by the course."

"Oh well, I suppose that is worth trying, and it doesn't sound very fatiguing. Is there anything else you can suggest?"

"A singularly ageing and disfiguring defect from which the corpulent often suffer is the accumulation of rolls of fat upon the back, particularly between the shoulders and at the base of the neck. This disfigurement can easily and speedily be cured by a daily exercise, consisting in stretching one's arms straight out in front and pressing the palms of the hands close together, then bringing them back level with the shoulders. This exercise should be done at least fifteen times every night, and even after a fortnight's daily practice it is astonishing to find how vast an improvement has been achieved, and how much straighter, stronger, and more erect the back becomes in consequence."

"I'm fat all over, not only between my shoulders," sighed the Girl.

"A general exercise strongly recommended to women who are putting on flesh, and who are anxious to rid themselves of it, consists in merely raising the arms high above the head and stretching them to the utmost limit; then keeping the knees perfectly rigid and the body still, let the arms fall slowly and steadily downward until the tips of the fingers touch the floor in front. You'll find it worth trying, for this is an exercise I recommend to women of all ages. It should, however, be persisted in twice a day until the body becomes so supple that the palms of the hands press the floor without any movement of the knees."

"I think I'd want something more vigorous," said the Girl.

"Well, another excellent exercise that will speedily take off the flesh that has accumulated round the waist, the hips, the abdomen and the back, is that of swimming on the floor. This feat is performed by getting a large felt rug, or thick bath blanket, and, after spreading it on the floor, lying face downward upon it, making the body absolutely limp and flat, then slowly going through the motion of swimming. This exercise not only works the muscles of the arms and the legs, but practically every part of the body. But I must warn you that after performing it once or twice the patient will find herself a mass of aches and pains.

Stout women would do well to try raising the arms above the head, then dropping them slowly until the finger-tips touch the floor, keeping the knees rigid all the time.

"Still, whatever the pain one suffers, the result will be found to be well worth the trouble, especially to those women who are really in earnest, and are anxious to get thin in the least possible time. Indeed, the more one aches, the more one should realise how flabby and ill-conditioned one's body has become, and how liable one is under such conditions to put on flesh with great rapidity."

"May I ask," said the Girl without enthusiasm, "how long this particular form of daily torture should last?"

"The Beauty Doctor who first discovered the value of this cure recommends that this particular exercise be practised once a day for the first week," said the Professor impersonally, "the time devoted to it being no longer than five or six minutes. For the remaining eighteen weeks, during which the cure lasts, the exercise must be performed for a quarter-of-an-hour every night and every morning."

"You don't take me in," said the Girl. "I know you invented that one yourself. Nobody else would have thought of anything so disagreeable," she added maliciously.

The Professor smiled grimly, but did not deny the accusation.

"Another and less severe method of reducing the hips is to stand upright, and slowly raise one leg as high as possible," he said, "until the knee almost touches the chest; then point the foot out in front, and bring the leg quickly downward, placing the feet close together.

Hip reduction may be effected by raising one leg until the knee almost touches the chest, then pointing the foot out in front, and bringing the leg quickly downward.

"This exercise should be persisted in for a long period, for it is neither very violent nor vigorous. Still it reduces one very slowly, but nevertheless very surely. It is particularly recommended to lazy women," he added with a cruel smile—"especially to those whose hips have become enlarged by much sitting.

"Women who are forced to lead a sedentary life, and put on flesh in consequence, will find it no difficult matter to reduce their weight and keep themselves supple if they perform daily an exercise which consists in sitting on a low milking-stool, placing one's feet firmly underneath, and then turning the body slowly round on its own axis—a performance that cures a 'wooden' waist in a very

short time, and effectually reduces flesh in all parts of the body."

"I thought you could take off fat by breathing exercises?" suggested the Girl.

"Yes, breathing exercises will be found to be of the greatest help in removing superfluous fat, especially from the chest and the front of the body where it is prone to accumulate, and seems to push the bust up in an unnatural manner. Such exercises should be indulged in in front of a widely-opened window, no matter whether the weather be hot or cold."

"That sounds less strenuous," said the Girl, as she breathed a sigh of relief.

"Other simple cures that may safely and confidently be recommended to the stout comprise abstaining from drinking liquid of any kind with one's meals, sipping instead a full tumbler of very hot water half-an-hour after each meal. Another tumblerful should be sipped before rising in the morning, and still another before retiring for the night.

"Hot orangeade and hot lemonade made without sugar and sipped between meals are very favourite and effective cures for obesity, and are much patronised by Frenchwomen, who regard them as a cure for bad complexions as well as an aid to slimness. Massage and Turkish baths taken every other day will likewise do much towards reducing an over-stout figure, while numerous concoctions made from herbs are advertised for this purpose, and do in many cases achieve great results, but these should never be taken without first consulting a doctor."

"I like that idea," said the Girl. "'Sip to get thin' is much easier than all those exercises."

Hot orangeade and hot lemonade made without sugar, and sipped between meals, are important aids to slimness.

"Far safer and far better than nostrums and chemical cures for corpulence are those that restrict the patient in the matter of food. These diet cures vary widely, but whichever is adopted, the patient should make a point of following it strictly and adhering to the prescribed *régime* for several months, as the apparent failure of so many of these cures is, in nearly every instance, merely the result of patients not following their cure consistently, and yet expecting speedy and marvellous results weeks before it has had time to work. In all cases of dieting, six months, at least, must elapse before a real cure is effected, for diet treatment must be gradual and persistent if it is to show lasting results."

"I don't like curtailing my meals," sighed the Girl, "but we poor victims of fat must do something if we would still be in the fashion!"

"One of the most successful diet cures for obesity is that which restricts the over-stout to the consumption of lean meat and green vegetables," said her instructor, "fruit that has been cooked without sugar, boiled fish, poultry, rusks or very thin toast, no butter or fat of any kind, and a strictly limited amount of tea or coffee, and a little white wine or claret. Beer, champagne, soda-water, and spirits must all be given up. When tea or coffee is drunk, both these beverages should be taken without sugar or cream."

"And what is the result of it all? An ounce of flesh lost a month!" the Girl said derisively.

"This diet, if persisted in, will cause the patient to lose from one to two pounds of flesh per week, and it is considered to be very healthy and beneficial to all patients. Still, in direct contrast to the above cure, there is the milk diet which has proved most beneficial to the over-stout of life and

has done wonders in many cases in removing superfluous fat.

"This restricts the patient to a diet of milk only for four days, followed by a menu consisting of the very lightest food on the fifth day, after which the milk diet recommences for another period of four days, during which time the patient should remain in bed. Indeed, many doctors recommend that the patient remains in bed throughout the entire thirty days during which the cure lasts, and in some cases they restrict the patient to the consumption of skim-milk only."

"I'll try that," said the Girl; "it is an excellent excuse for being lazy."

"Still," put in the Professor quickly, for he didn't mean his lecture to end so soon, "just as stoutness is disfiguring to many women, a large number also suffer from excessive thinness, which has an equally disfiguring effect, making them look aged and ill, and anything but healthy specimens of humanity. Here also the amateur can do wonders in improving her appearance and putting on the flesh that so many women are only too anxious to get rid of."

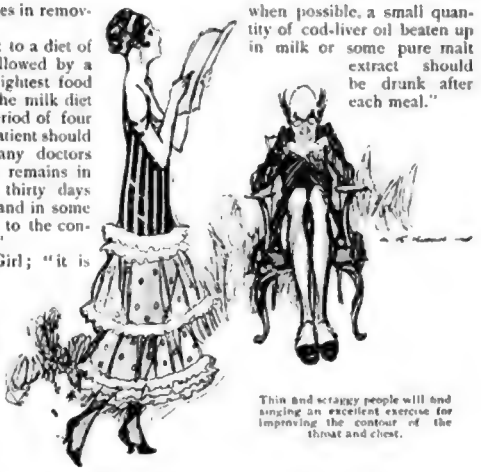
"I wish that part of your lecture did interest me," said the Girl, "but, alas! it doesn't."

The Professor still droned on.

"For leanness, as for corpulence, the safest and surest cure lies in dieting and in physical exercises. Plenty of sleep is also helpful, and thin people who wish to grow fat should always endeavour to obtain at least ten hours' sleep out of every twenty-four, while an afternoon *siesta* or an occasional nap indulged in during the day is very helpful.

"In place of meat, a generous diet of fish fried in butter, fresh eggs, rich soups, milk, farinaceous foods such as bread and puddings of all sorts, vegetables, and a good deal of fruit should be adopted. A cup of chocolate taken before rising every morning, and a tumblerful of milk and a couple of slices of bread-and-butter taken immediately before retiring, help very much towards the desired end.

"In short, meals should be frequent and diet liberal, while salt, vinegar, and all kinds of pickles and acids should be avoided. Cocoa should replace tea and coffee, and, when possible, a small quantity of cod-liver oil beaten up in milk or some pure malt extract should be drunk after each meal."



Thin and scraggy people will find singing an excellent exercise for improving the contour of the throat and chest.

"That cod-liver oil has spoilt it all," protested the Girl. "Up to then I was feeling positively ravenous!"

But the Professor affected not to hear; he went on with his lecture unmindful of her frivolous interruptions.

"Perhaps the greatest disfigurement a thin woman suffers from are those deep hollows at the base of the throat, known as 'salt-cellars.' These can be improved and often completely cured by breathing exercises specially prescribed for getting rid of this defect and helping to produce a full throat and a well-rounded chest.

"The way to set to work is to throw a window wide open, and, standing in front of it, take a deep breath through the nostrils, keeping the mouth firmly shut. Hold the breath for ten seconds, then breathe the air out again slowly and steadily, but be careful not to contract the abdominal muscles while breathing.

"Another variation of the same exercise is to shut the mouth and close one nostril by placing a finger on the side of it, then draw a deep breath through the nostril, count ten, remove the finger, and breathe out again in the same steady, slow fashion.

"Singing is another excellent exercise for improving the contour of the throat and chest, a daily practice of scales and exercises being

a great aid to beauty culture if the patient is thin and scraggy."

"Oh, dear, and I *have* such a nice voice!" said the Girl. "I know I'm destined to be fat!"

"Another disfigurement which so many otherwise pretty women suffer from is the all too common complaint of round shoulders and an ugly stoop. All manner of surgical bodices and braces have been invented in order to try and cure or counteract this disfigurement, which often amounts to a deformity. Nothing, however, is more efficacious than wearing a pair of stout webbing bands passed over the shoulders and firmly crossed behind and securely fastened round the waist. These can be easily and inexpensively made at home, and are really useful in curing a stoop of any kind.

"A very good exercise recommended to all who suffer from round shoulders is that of keeping the elbows straight and throwing the arms back until the hands touch behind. This should be performed both on rising and retiring to bed, and practised for several minutes at a time.

"Round shoulders can also be improved and cured by the daily use of a home-made shoulder-pump which is made by fitting an iron ring into the woodwork of a door. Through this pass a long, stout cord which has a light weight at one end and a loop padded with linen at the other.

"To work the pump the patient must stand a yard or so away, holding the loop in one hand and, gradually raising the arm backward till it is upright against the head, pull the weight slowly up and down. Both arms must be exercised in this manner, and, if this is done regularly, considerable benefit will ensue."

"I'll remember that when I'm old and develop a stoop," said the Girl, making a note.

"Of course, the earlier in life one sets about practising any exercises that are to act as an aid to beauty culture, the better will be the result," said the Professor, "for one of the great axioms which the Beauty Doctor must ever bear in mind is that 'prevention is better than cure.' In accordance with this theory, the value of a course of gymnastics for growing girls cannot be over-estimated, as nothing is more helpful towards producing a beautiful, upright figure.

"Still, a great deal can be done at a mature age, only patients must beware of the danger of over-development of the muscles—a state of affairs which makes the patient ungainly instead of graceful, and one that no beauty culture, however clever and scientific, can ever hope to cure. Why, where are you off to?" for the girl was preparing to leave him.

"I'm going to try *all* those exercises in your gym now, *and*," the Girl continued deliberately, "you are going to show me how they're done. The practising, I think, will be more entertaining than the preaching," she finished thoughtfully.

(Next month the Professor will address the Girl on the subject of bright eyes and good teeth.)

MARY.

The prettiest girl in the village
  Was Mary Elizabeth Jane;
Her father resorted to tillage
  His pitiful pittance to gain,
  And worked on the farm in the rain.

His oats and his wurzels, his rye and his wheat
  Were highly esteemed in those parts;
But Mary, disdaining to toil in the heat,
Had all of the boys at her dear little feet,
  Preferring a harvest of hearts.

Y.

WAR HORSES

By Fox Russell.

If he will allow me to say so, there is not much that Mr. Fox Russell does not know about horses. He has hunted and raced all his life. He once confessed, in a previous *Royal* article: "I would rather hunt a donkey along the Thames Embankment than not hunt at all." In the following pages he deals in characteristic fashion with the engrossing subject of the horse in war time.—Ed. R.M.

Cavalry in this "digging in" warfare, with wire entanglements and trenches everywhere, have had few, if any, fair opportunities. The gallant but fruitless charge of the famous Scots Greys was evidence in support of this. Barbed wire is a thing which no horse can ever be expected to face. Still, this obstacle only applies to making a charge, not to transport or gun haulage work.

Where roads are fairly good, mechanical traction will always beat the horse-drawn waggon, and the aeroplane now takes up the duty, to a large extent, formerly performed by the mounted scout, the eyes and ears of an army. But the horse comes into his own again when cross-country work has to be done.

I freely allow that a motor bicycle for road work, even including the steepest of gradients, can give many points to the finest staying horse—but I know which of the two I should choose to ride across a ploughed field! Had Colonel —— and his companions been mounted on bikes instead of horses when, during the early part of the present war, they accomplished that famous twenty-mile ride across ridge and furrow, hedge and ditch, they would hardly have arrived at their destination either in the time or good condition they did.

I suppose it may fairly be said that the ideal horses for the sundry and divers military services are hard to find—at the price! Take the case of a near wheeler in a gun-carriage team; here you want plenty of power and substance combined with a certain amount of what the dealers call "nippiness." He has, at one and the same time, to be a ride and drive horse, for he has to carry his sturdy R.A. driver whilst holding back his no small share of the weight of the limber or helping to draw it up a stiff hill, very often over broken roads or a ploughed field, not to mention the crossing of minor ditches, banks, and other obstacles.

This brings me to another important point in the gun-team horse, steadiness under fire, and this is a matter which has to be taken largely on trust, as no adequate practice in private could mimic a Neuve Chapelle.

Since commencing this I have been chatting with an old friend, a captain in the R.A., who has just passed unscathed through the last-mentioned fiery ordeal (after five months in the trenches), and from him I hear that some of these gun-teams went almost mad in the infernal din; at such times, with bursting shrapnel and other enemy greetings all around him, neither Driver nor Gunner Atkins has an enviable time of it.

"Not a dull moment, I assure you," as my friend said to me, describing his experiences.

Nerve is even more liable to go wrong in a horse than it is in a man, and nothing upsets the equine race much more than noise. Witness the nervous suffering of two- and three-year-olds on a racecourse, and nerve is an all-important factor in the making of the modern war horse. Relatively speaking, a staunch gun-carriage horse is much harder to get hold of than a good hunter.

Our English hunting stables, at the beginning of the present war, sent out no fewer than the almost incredible number of 200,000 horses, a goodly proportion of which were admirably adapted for officers' chargers and troop horse work; their steadiness under fire had, of course, to be taken as an unknown quantity. Naturally, I am only dealing with the question of noise and the excitement of the crowd; no one expects a horse to remain steady after he has been holed by a bullet or struck by a bit of flying shrapnel.

A field day at Aldershot, especially in point of noise, can be at best but a mere picnic, a very incomplete preparation for a modern battlefield, and I can fully sympathise with the Scots Greys' trooper who, after their splendid charge, said to a comrade: "To go through that lot you want to borrow a slice of hell and train your horse to jump red-hot telegraph wires!"

It may not be generally known that grey horses are stained brown before going into action, for the obvious reason that it is highly undesirable to offer so conspicuous a mark to the enemy as the former colour.

During the last five-and-twenty years the efficiency of the riding-school system practised by the British Army has increased enormously, and really the wonderful things horses are made to do nowadays almost take one's breath away; circus tricks, exhibitions of the *haute école*, combining and contrasting with a thorough training in cross-country work, render the modern troop horses as intelligent as men, and twice as handy as a lady's-maid!

A famous old hunting man once said on a memorable occasion:

"They talk about shoulders, hocks, girth, muscle, and I don't know what all besides; what *I* say is, give me a horse with brains for cross-country work—he has to take care of the bigger fool of the two and think for both!"

Nothing I should say is a more hopeless task than to induce an untrained horse to lie down. (Try it for yourself, dear readers! I have kept horses nearly all my life, and never succeeded in the task.) And yet to-day the cavalry troopers make their horses lie down on their sides while they themselves take cover behind them, and carry on a brisk fire at an imaginary enemy across the horses' withers.

They teach them to jump a single hurdle set up in the middle of a field, whilst I myself rode one of these trained and highly educated animals over a walking-stick held at arm's length by a friend. This same mare was also said to be extremely clever over single strands of wire, but, although several sorts of a fool, my proclivities did not lead me in the direction of jumping unnecessary wire fences!

I have seen at different times trained military horses jump a dining-table with half-a-dozen lighted candles on it, and have owned a chestnut gelding which would at any time follow me up a fairly steep flight of stone steps and down again, whilst Colonel Davidson, R.H.A., once showed me an interesting trick which he had taught his first charger.

Grey and white horses are stained brown in war time to make them less conspicuous.

We were on our road to a meet of the Mid-Kent Staghounds at the time, and riding into the yard of "The Lion" at Farningham, found the place almost blocked with vehicles from which the horses had been detached and stabled. At once Colonel Davidson slipped off his horse and ran in through the midst of the carriages, dodging round the carts, chaises, etc., and with wondrous skill and the agility of a Shetland pony, his big horse followed him, always keeping within two or three yards of his master.

"There," said the latter, "I think that would be a very useful trick for any horse to know if he and his rider parted company during an action."

From a life-long association with horses, chiefly of the hunter and steeplechaser type, I say without fear of contradiction that horses, and especially the better-bred ones, can be made every bit as intelligent as dogs, and it is only because their size precludes constant companionship with man that they have hitherto been looked upon as inferior to the canine race. Where we are going to look for horses after the terrible wastage of the present war it is difficult to say. Just to fill up gaps alone about 50,000 a year are being, or have been, sent out to France.

I was told by a friend, a Horse Artillery officer, only a week ago, of an incident which took place at the latter end of last August on Salisbury Plain. His battery had been out on night manœuvres (in the pouring rain), and did not return to camp until mid-day following, having covered about forty miles, horses and men both being dog tired. Orders had meantime arrived, directing them to march, in about a couple of hours, for Southampton *en route* for the Front, and, tired as they were, they started, and accomplished their journey well within the time allowed. There was an instance where not only every stone, but every pound of weight must have told its tale on the horses concerned.

From thirty to forty miles is a fair average day's work for horses

No peace training can prepare gun-horses to face such an inferno of noise as, for example, Neuve Chapelle, and some of the gun-teams at this engagement went almost mad in the din. For this reason powerfully built men are selected for R.A. drivers.

well looked after and well fed, though if the roads are bad, dried up, stony, or the sun very powerful—a matter which causes horses far more suffering than rain or even snow—they would quickly get stale on this continuous journeying.

More than once in the course of a season, I have had to ride a tired hunter over sixty miles in the course of the day, but this was an exceptional strain that the horse would probably not be called upon to repeat for many weeks to come, and, needless to say, he was well rested before being asked to do any severe work again.

Speaking broadly, hunters make the best of chargers in time of war; a goodly proportion of them are thoroughbred, or, at least, well-bred, and almost all are "brainy"; great points in their favour.

In the two Boer wars which have occurred in my time, the best fate which a badly wounded horse could expect was to be shot; too many, alas, were denied the merciful bullet—out of necessity.

All that, however, has been changed now, and thanks to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Blue Cross Society, and the Dumb Friends' League, there are equine hospitals on the battle-fields with a first aid corps and some hundreds of veterinary surgeons with their assistants, ready to deal with all the sufferers. It is very satisfactory to know that a large proportion of the wounded horses are eventually restored to health and usefulness again.

During what proved to be a particularly wet winter our horses in France suffered considerably from rheumatism, bronchial affections, influenza, etc., which was not surprising considering the vast majority of them had to stand out in the open, day and night; many of them grew coats like that of a Polar bear.

As to the treatment received by British military horses from their riders, I should say that it is remarkably good. Practically all British cavalry officers are sportsmen, and so are the Tommies at heart, the latter lacking only opportunities; a true sportsman would never be cruel to his horse.

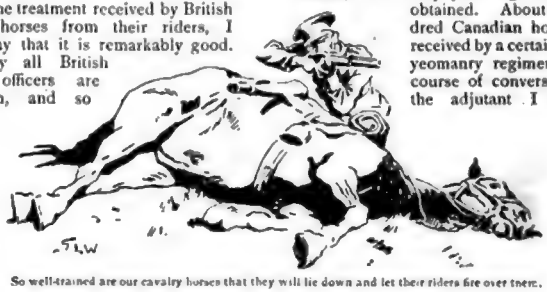
As to giving opportunities for sport, I think the Kaiser's army officers would have a fit if they knew that the 10th Hussars officers actually provided ponies for their non-coms and men to play polo on in India!

In spite of the motor, whose usefulness in haulage of big guns to the front is undenied and undeniable, there are several sorts of ground where the functions of the traction-engine end and those of the equine gun-team begin. Generally speaking, horses have the honour of galloping their gun on to the field of action and standing the hellish racket of the bursting shells, and the percentage of killed among the gun-teams is always a very high one.

The powerful beasts, excited by their surroundings, maddened by the rush they have just taken part in, sweating, and covered with foam, often get out of hand, and, rearing and plunging, threaten to break away from their harness. To contend with a pair of these half-frightened, half-infuriated animals is all one man's work, and the authorities do well to pick out powerfully-built men for the R.A. drivers.

Should one of the team be hit with a piece of shrapnel, or even should a shell burst in close proximity to the pulling, straining horses, the drivers' energies receive an even greater call upon them.

When the present war first broke out, the Germans succeeded in obtaining many thousands of horses from Denmark. We, for our part, sent buyers innumerable to Argentina and Canada, from both of which places horses of a very useful type, very superior to the class I remember whilst in Canada, over twenty years ago, were freely obtained. About five hundred Canadian horses were received by a certain Midland yeomanry regiment, and in course of conversation with the adjutant I was told



So well-trained are our cavalry horses that they will lie down and let their riders fire over them.

Barbed wire is an obstacle no horse can be expected to face, and wire entanglements have proved fatal to cavalry charges in this war.

that not five per cent. of them turned out badly.

Wet and cold combined have tried horses sorely during the past winter campaign; horses can stand cold, providing the transition from hot stables is not of too violent a character, but they cannot stand wet with it.

Our Russian allies are enabled to mount themselves at a much cheaper rate than can the peoples of all the other countries engaged in the present titanic struggle. I can only hope that the generality of Russian horses do not resemble the only specimen I ever had to do with hailing from the Kingdom of the Great White Tsar. The animal in question was a slack-loined, three-cornered, angular, black, who even in the summer had a coat as rough as a Teddy Bear's and about as much expression in the eye.

He *was* a slug! He belonged to a friend of mine with whom I went to stay in the Broads district, in Norfolk; my host was driving me out some three or four miles along a lonely road skirting one of Broads.

My friend encouraged the pony with his umbrella when all ordinary means had failed for raising steam to anything over four miles an hour. Presently he pulled up—the Russian did not need much stopping—and alighting, he invited me to do likewise, leading the way down to the water's edge where his boat lay tied up to the bank.

"We'll go for a sail," he said briefly.

"But the pony—what are you going to do with him?" I asked in a mystified manner.

"Oh, he'll be all right—he'd remain where he is for a week. Look, he's asleep already!"

"But," I still demurred——

"Oh, come along," said my host laughing. "We shall be back in a couple of hours, and you'll find him in just the same somnolent condition as he is now. He's a real soldier; he'd sooner die than run!"

There are just three small points upon which it might not be disloyal to throw out suggestions.

Point I.—Is it quite advisable to hog the manes of military horses? Everyone admits that a horse's mane affords the most convenient hold to a man who is trying to mount him, and this is doubly so when the horse is restive, as he is most likely to be on the field of battle. Even the leaving on of a special lock of the mane near the withers does not answer the same purpose of giving a rough and ready aid for climbing hurriedly into the saddle.

Point II.—No two horses' mouths are exactly similar and yet we bit them all alike with a heavy curb and snaffle, and many an animal with a tender mouth who would run up to a smooth or even a twisted snaffle, would altogether refuse to take hold of the severe curb with which he is now confronted. Is there any actual necessity to have for use in the Army a uniform pattern of bit only?

Point III.—As soon as this war is over and things settle down a little, would it not be advisable to consider the whole question of reducing the weight on a cavalry horse's back by the simple expedient of enlisting only men under 9 st. 7 lb. or say 10 st. as maximum, instead of the brawny trooper of 13 st. or so. The difference in weight would tell greatly in favour of the horse, whilst a 9 st. 7 lb. man would be just as efficient for cavalry purposes as, and look much neater in the saddle than, his longer, but not necessarily stronger, brother.

PLUCK.

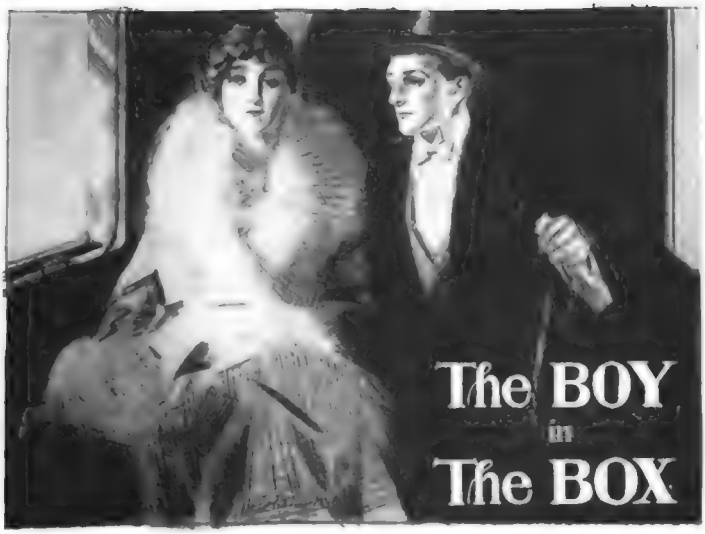
Sixteen he was—or so he said.
"I've come to 'list, sir. Out, for France."
The captain smiled, but shook his head:
"You're much too young, lad. Not a chance."

"Then can't I be a bugler-lad?"
He pleaded eagerly to go.
"I like your pluck." The captain had
A keen regret in saying "No."

He begged again: "A drummer, sir!
I'm surely old enough, and fit
To fight—or die?" The officer
Said: "No use, sonny; not one bit."

Sadly he turned to leave the place,
Downcast and disappointed; when
A sudden thought lit up his face:
"I'll go as 'mascot,' please sir, then."

Amanda Bebbington.



The BOY in The BOX

By

Phyllis Dare

There is no greater favourite among musical comedy stars than Miss Phyllis Dare, whose singing and dancing have added charm to so many musical plays. Miss Dare's talents are not confined to the stage, however, as the following story of theatrical life, from her pen, will go to prove.—Ed. R.M.

Two young men in a stage box at Nix's Theatre, in the days before the war. That's how my story begins.

On the brilliantly-lighted stage a brilliantly-gowned, brilliantly painted, brilliantly-smiling chorus surrounded the principal comedian—a fellow possessing infinite adiposity, and an inexhaustible fund of natural humour.

As the long, lovely line of Nix's Chorus—*the* Beauty Chorus of the moment—swung across the stage, the last girl raised her eyes to the stage box. Quickly she looked again, right into the eyes of the taller of the two young men. Then she smiled—deliberately, provocatively, and skipped out of sight, into the mystic depths of the "wings."

The man, who was taller and older than his companion, leant back.

"Bijou!" he murmured. "Little ripper! Haven't seen her for months. Dear little Bijou—not changed an atom; wearing jolly well."

The younger man smiled—a smile that was slow, and indescribably fascinating.

"So she's called Bijou?" he remarked lazily.

"She?"

"Yes. The girl who smiled at you."

His friend sat up. "Did you see?".

The younger man nodded. Few things happened that he failed to see, only he didn't always make a noise about it.

Basil Brent chuckled, and the pupils of his big blue eyes grew larger and darker.

"Bijou—Bijou—what's-her-name? Drexton! That's it! Met her at supper last year, somewhere or other. Pretty girl; jolly smart, too. Very pally with young Lidstone and that set—oh, forgot you don't go in for chorus girls—you wouldn't know, of course! I must ask her out to supper—'pon my word, I must!"

The Boy smiled, only he wasn't exactly a boy, merely younger than his companion in years, and a thousand other things, too.

Soon afterwards a hastily-scribbled note found its way through the usual, palm oiled channels to the overheated, over-scented room which Bijou shared with three other Show Ladies. She scrawled "Delighted" on the reverse side of the epistle, and followed the shrieking call boy into the lift.

On her next entrance she backed up her monosyllabic acceptance with a radiant smile, and a determined, unmistakable nod.

Basil grinned widely.

"Good!" he remarked. "Oh—I forgot about you," he added contritely.

The Boy opened his eyes in surprise. "*What* about me?" was his lazy query.

"Supper—and—er—all that sort of thing."

"Oh—count me out, anyway. I hate chorus girls, and supper parties."

"Rot! Why don't you ask someone out on your own account? Rattling pretty girls most of them. That little blonde—second on the left—rosebud perched on her shoulder. Jupiter, what a figure! Or there's—— *My heavens!*"

He came to a dead stop, and sat staring at the stage.

"What's wrong?" demanded the Boy.

"Holy Moses—will you look! There, in the back row—against that pillar on the right—the girl in mauve! Did you ever see such a frump—such a fright! Well, this *is* an eye-opener. The first really plain girl I've ever seen on the boards at Nix's!"

The Boy leant forward. Then he saw her. Quite alone, she was standing right at the back. She had always stood at the back, during the three months of her life at Nix's. As far as she could see, she would always stand there. She was so plain. One day they would tell her she might go, only that wouldn't be just yet, because her voice was so useful.

Meanwhile, she wore her simple mauve dress, and stood at the back, and got badly snubbed in the dressing-room, and opened her mouth—a curved, red mouth—when the conductor raised his baton, and sang, and sang. That was what she was paid for—two pounds for seven performances; a fortune to her.

Up in the stage box, the Boy still leant forward, his eyes fixed on her. She looked so lonely.

"Poor kid," he muttered. "Rather a sweet little face!"

"Awful, isn't she?" put in Basil, grinning at Bijou down on the footlights.

The Boy shook his head.

"No," he answered. "I like her. She looks different."

"Lord—you're right! She does! A Bromide, my dear fellow, a Bromide—take it from me. *She* doesn't go out to supper once in a blue moon, I'll bet a fiver. Doubt if she's ever been asked, even."

The Boy in the box stood up.

"I'm going to ask her now!" he announced.

Basil dragged his eyes from the ravishing beauties on the stage, and contemplated his friend.

"What's that?" he inquired weakly.

"I'm going to ask her to have supper with me," repeated the Boy. Then: "No—dash it all, it's a beastly insult. I simply can't; I don't know her. She doesn't look the usual run of chorus girl. I daren't."

"Don't talk rot," Basil advised him. "I tell you that girl's never been asked out to supper in her life. Insult, indeed? She'll be fearfully bucked—friend for life, and so on. Besides, she can always say 'No' if she doesn't want to go."

The Boy took a deep breath.

"That's true," he said. "And I'm certain she *will* say 'no.' But I'll try my luck, anyhow."

Basil grinned fatuously.

"Go in and win, old son," he chuckled. "And listen to me—I'll bet you a supper at the Monarch a fortnight to-night—Bijou and me, you and—the Bromide—that she says, 'Yes.' If she comes to-night, I pay, and you bring her along to the Monarch. If she doesn't, *you* pay—and find another girl. Is it a bet?"

"Yes," said the Boy, and began to write.

His pencilled letter reached her ten minutes later, in a dressing-room where seven chorus girls, in various stages of undress, were performing a leisurely "change."

The girl in mauve the plainest girl in Nix's Beauty chorus—unfolded the crumpled sheet of paper, **amid giggles and sneers and stares. . . . . She had never received a letter from in front before, never been asked out to supper, in her life.** [*Page* 510, *col.* 1]

The girl in mauve—the plainest girl in Nix's Beauty Chorus—unfolded the crumpled sheet of paper, amid giggles and sneers and stares. He said, quite simply:

I'm sitting in the stage box on your left. Will you have supper with me to-night? Anywhere you like. I'm very lonely, and though I don't know you yet, I'd like to, as soon as you'll let me. Please say "Yes." THE BOY IN THE BOX.

She read it over and over again, while pandemonium raged around her. Intense indignation, intense joy, a sense of outraged modesty, a sense of life being worth living—a thousand emotions and thoughts passed through her mind in a few seconds.

The Boy in the Box . . .

It was so wonderful, and so abominably rude! She had never received a letter from in front before, never been asked out to supper, in her life. Basil was right; he knew chorus girls—most of them.

She wanted to say "Yes." She longed to say "No."

It *was* an insult, and yet the other girls went out, every night of their lives. Why should she stand aloof? Yes—aloofness had been her attitude since she came to Nix's. She knew she was different from other girls. She took a fierce pride in maintaining that difference. She didn't want to look like they did. She didn't want to talk as they did. She didn't want to do the things that they did. It would have been so easy just to slip off the straight road, but her code said "Don't."

With her red mouth set in a hard line, she wrote her answer:

DEAR BOY IN THE BOX,—Thank you—but my answer is "No." LOYOLA MOON.

Then she changed, with a feverish haste, into her "finale" dress. And, behind her make-up, her eyes ached and burnt.

He read her letter in the shadows of the box, read it once, and again, and, strangely enough, a smile crept into his eyes. It was a curious smile, half triumph, half disappointment.

Basil, acquainted with her answer, whistled expressively.

"Good heavens! Well, I'm glad for your sake! I *said* she was a Bromide!"

Then, reaching for a cigarette, he edged into the crowd, turning towards the stage door. And the Boy walked home, thinking.

In his rooms, he drank a whisky-and-soda, smoked a cigarette, and sat before a tired fire, still thinking.

The girl—the plain girl—took off her make-up, got into her simple street clothes, mounted a motor-'bus, and arrived at her unattractive rooms, dog-tired. A saucepan in the fender held her invariable nightly supper—bread and milk. Milk is so good for one's voice. She put the saucepan on the fire, and sat down wearily. In her handbag was a crumpled note, in such round, boyish handwriting—her first letter from in front, and her last, too, in all probability.

She wondered what he was like, this "Boy in the Box," wondered what had made him pick her out from that lovely, dazzling crowd. Smoothing the crumpled page, she read his letter again and again. And the tears that had smarted and burnt beneath her make-up crept, unchecked, into her eyes and fell on the letter. If he could have seen her, how he would have laughed, but her own laugh ended in a sob.

The bread and milk, when she remembered it, was scorched, so she went supperless to bed.

But, then, letters from in front were such rare things—for her.

It might have ended there—in cigarette smoke, idle thoughts, and scorched bread-and-milk. But it didn't.

Two days later, the Boy in the Box answered Basil Brent's telephone call.

"Come to Nix's again to night," said Basil. "I've got the same box, and Bijou's coming out to supper. I say—you escaped something the other night. Bijou's told me all about your girl in blue—oh, mauve, was it? Well, anyhow, Bijou says she's got a voice, can't dress for toffee, and thinks it's fast to go out to supper! So really you escaped lightly. Coming along?"

"Did I?" mused the Boy. "I wonder? Yes, thanks very much. I'll be there."

It was Fate, without a doubt; it *had* to be. Fate had pulled the strings.

A messenger-boy sped on his way to Nix's Theatre soon afterwards, whereby it happened that Miss Loyola Moon received a letter while she was making-up:

I didn't mean to be rude. I was honestly sincere in saying that I wanted to know you. I did—I *do*. I mean to know you. If you won't come out with me or speak to me, I swear I'll follow you day and night until you do. I shall be in front to-night, in the same box, sitting nearest to the stage. Please have supper with me afterwards—I want you to. If you won't, at least let me see you for a minute.

THE BOY IN THE BOX.

Her cheeks went white, then scarlet, and she hid the letter, trembling. She couldn't stand chaff to-night. When she had made-up better than usual and got into her first dress, she wrote an answer:

DEAR BOY IN THE BOX,

Supper is impossible, but if you will come to the stage-door ten minutes after the curtain rises on the second act, I will see you for a minute

LOYOLA MOON.

It cost her something to get that little note sent round to the "gentleman sitting nearest the stage" in a certain box. But these things *can* be done, and, if she thought it worth while, what did anything else matter?

Just before the curtain rose on the second act, the stage-door keeper, duly rewarded, sent the Boy's card to Miss Moon, and delivered her answer. She would come to the stage-door after the opening of the act.

It seemed—it was—a century. At last came a crashing sound, a burst of shrill laughter, and then hurrying feet raced up the stone staircase. Snatches of song, in piercing soprano voices, echoed along the corridor as, by slow degrees, Nix's Beauty Chorus drifted upstairs, leaving a trail of scent and sequins in its wake.

Silently, unexpectedly, the swing doors parted, and she stood there looking at him. One arm, rounded and white, stretched outwards, holding back the door. She wore the mauve frock—or was it blue?—and her head was high as she looked up at him.

From his superior height, outside the door leading to Stageland, he looked down at her. And somewhere, far away inside him, where his heart lay hidden, he was trembling like a little child.

"I—you—it's very good of you——" he began, and his lips were dry. How foolish it was!

She smiled, so nervously. She had never spoken to a man—like this—in all her life.

"Don't say that," she began, then saw the stage-door keeper's grin, and grew scarlet.

"Come just inside, won't you?" she murmured, in such a pitiful hurry. "I mustn't ask you to come to my room—we're not allowed to have anyone up, you know—but——"

He broke in. "Yes, I know. It's jolly nice of you to see me at all. I don't deserve it. I—you made me feel an awful outsider the other night. I'm so very, very sorry. Do believe that."

She was leaning against the wall; while he spoke she pressed the palms of her hands against it, flat, as though seeking support. Silently she raised her eyes, heavy with cosmetic, and looked squarely at him. And, as she looked, he smiled.

"I *do* believe you," said Loyola Moon. "I do. I'm sorry I made you feel an—an outsider. I didn't mean to. But, you see, I—I don't go out to supper."

"And I don't ask girls out to supper—as a rule," finished the Boy. He was very tall, as he stood beside her, but then she was such a little, insignificant thing.

"I did ask you—because I wanted you to say 'Yes,' and you said 'No.'"

He wanted to touch her, to feel her hand in his, to hold her tight—so tight—in his arms. She was so small, so wistful.

"I said 'No' because I didn't know you. I didn't know your name—I didn't even know what you looked like."

He caught at that whispered sentence.

"If you had, would you have said 'Yes'?"

She hesitated. "I—I don't know. I don't think so. It's all so strange."

Unconsciously, she pressed her hand over the front of her *décolleté* dress, where his card lay hidden against her whitened flesh.

"I don't think I should have gone out with you in any case. I don't go out to supper—because I never get asked!"

She blurted it out defiantly, but couldn't look at him until she heard him laugh.

"Why—that's simple!" said he. "Look here, *I've* asked you, and I want you. Will you come to-night?"

She caught her lower lip between her teeth, because it would shake so absurdly. He was so near, and so tall, and so—— Oh, and she wanted to say "Yes" so frightfully, —more than she'd ever wanted anything in her life.

She swallowed hard, and brushed one hand across her eyes.

"Will you?" repeated the Boy in the Box.

"I——" She tried to speak, and couldn't.

Far away, the call-boy banged on several doors, and shouted lustily:

"All down, ladies, *please*—duet well on. Hurry up, *please!*"

A shriek, laughter, swishing skirts, and clattering heels.

Down by the stage-door a girl in a mauve frock stood leaning against the cold stone corridor, while someone waited for her answer.

"They're coming down!" whispered the Boy. "Quickly!—quickly!—will you come?"

Bending down, he caught her wrists, while her palms still kissed the wall, and bent over her, staring down into her eyes—staring and staring—mesmerising her.

"Y—yes," whispered Loyola Moon.

She lived in Dreamland, did the Plainest Girl in Nix's Chorus, for many wonderful days. He was so kind, so considerate. And the thought that made her glow all over was that he liked her—Loyola—just as she was. He had chosen her from all that lovely bunch of girls. She didn't know why—she didn't *want* to know why—she was so wonderfully happy. Then, one cruel day, she overheard something.

Bijou Drexton said it. Bijou was sitting in her dressing-room, between two large mirrors—and the door was wide open. She always sat between two mirrors; then she could see herself whichever way she turned her head. She was talking to an interested crowd.

"—And Basil told me all about it. It was a bet, my dear. He bet this other man a supper somewhere or other that Loyola'd go out to supper, if she was asked. So the other man took on the bet, and wrote round and asked her. And——"

And Loyola, passing, heard.

So *that* was why! It was just a bet—just an idle bet. He didn't like her, the real Loyola; he had never liked her. He had done it for a bet. And she had thought—oh, what a fool, what a fool she had been! She should have guessed!

It was the first real sorrow she had known. It meant so much to her—his friendship, his affection. It was just as though the light had gone out, for ever and ever. You see, he had never cared. Bijou's words proved that:

"He took on the bet, and wrote round!"

For days, for nights that sentence burnt itself into her brain. How he must have hated her—how bored he must have been! Why, she wasn't even pretty!

She avoided him for five days. How, she didn't know exactly. She stayed away from the theatre, and refused to see him when he came to her unattractive rooms. She didn't write—she couldn't. It hurt too much. On the fifth night, when she had whispered to herself for the millionth time, "A bet—just for a bet," she left the stage-door, muffled up to her eyes, and walked straight into his arms.

It was very dark in the passage leading to the street, but she knew him, just by the mere feel of his coat, just by the thrill in her heart. And he caught her wrists, exactly as he had done that first night in the corridor at Nix's.

But he didn't speak. He just drew her along towards the open street, towards a waiting taxi. And she, trembling, allowed herself to be led.

"Get in, please," said the Boy. Then he climbed in, too, and, in the darkness, they were alone.

His hand found hers, and held it—an ungloved, cold little hand.

"Now," said the Boy, in a funny, hoarse voice, "what does it all mean? I don't understand."

She began to speak. She could not see that he was white, even his lips. She could not guess that his heart was beating, throbbing, till it nearly killed him—just at the nearness, the sweetness, the aloofness of her. She began to speak—and couldn't. So she cried, like a baby that is hurt, not knowing why, and through her tears she told him everything.

Of course, when he laughed she could have murdered him cheerfully. For he did laugh, most certainly—do you blame him? After which it became *his* turn to talk.

"I won the bet before I saw you," he told her. "I won the bet when you said 'No.' You see, I *knew* you'd say 'No.' I only asked you, so that you might say 'No.'"

"But," protested Loyola, dazed and doubtful, "suppose I *had* said 'Yes'?"

"You couldn't—for you wouldn't have been *you*," announced the Boy. "Anyhow, if you had, I'd have taken you out to supper that night—*and never seen you again!* My dear, it was because you were *you*—because you said 'No,' that I fell in love with you and made up my mind to know you. I was wondering how it could be done when Basil rang up to say he had the same box, and would I join him? It seemed like fate—and that's my only excuse. Am I forgiven?"

Loyola Moon sighed—such a happy sigh.

"I'm so glad it wasn't just for a bet," she murmured.

"And you *do* love me—a little?" he demanded.

Loyola looked at him shyly. "I—I'm so plain——" she began, with such a wistful, diffident air.

"Oh—you duffer!" cried the Boy in the Box.

"UGH!"

The relative proportions of the powder and the jam as they appear to the small boy, whose woe is so touchingly depicted by Esmond.

People Taking Medicine Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

By Lesbia Robinson.

We start taking medicine in babyhood when dill water and soothing syrup are poured down our infant throats, and we must either swallow it or choke. Later on we take it from choice, because having consulted a doctor we cannot well ignore his commands, or because Mrs. Neverwell, of 295a Cockspur Gardens, Camberwell, maintains in our pet newspaper that "Hicks' Headache Healer" relieved her of pain after two doses.

There are people, tiresome, self-sufficient souls, who regard the taking of medicine as a sign of moral weakness, and doctors and chemists as mere cumberers of the earth. But perhaps they are a degree less annoying than the adventurous souls who are for ever trying new remedies for complaints which often enough exist only in their imaginations.

Aunt Susannah was one of these. She scanned the paper daily in search of a new remedy for indigestion or a sure and certain cure for asthma, and her chief grievance in life was that chemists did not indulge in sales, and she had no opportunity of acquiring bargains in emulsions and iron tonics. This was until the war came. A threatened shortage of food worried her not at all, but a shortage in drugs, she felt, would be indeed a personal calamity. So she began to economise. To her amazement, far from feeling any ill effects, her health improved.

"A Combined Assault."—Mr. Thomas Henry's idea of the methods necessary in administering medicine to a rebellious youngster.

Then one day she read in her paper that it was the duty of every patriot to abstain as far as possible from meat that our men in khaki might wax lusty on the flesh of

"A Youthful Solution"—Mr. Cottington Taylor's suggestion to the schoolboy who wishes to dispose of his medicine.

oxen and sheep. This being the case, Aunt Susannah argued the same applied to drugs. In a moment of supreme self-sacrifice she scrapped her medicine bottles and sent her big medicine chest and her stock of lotions, creams and pills, to the nearest military hospital. And now Aunt Susannah spends her medicine money on wool and ascribes her new-found health to the restful influence of knitting.

Children are invariably a trial when it comes to taking medicine, and the united efforts of the entire household are usually needed to administer even a teaspoonful of physic. Even then there are frequently casualties if the victim happens to let fly with his heels in time-honoured fashion. Of course, bribery is frequently countenanced in this connection, and an agreement is entered into by which Richard, aged five, agrees to swallow one teaspoonful of cough mixture on receipt of one large-sized chocolate cream or two small ones.

Some adults are little better than children when it comes to swallowing physic, and since it cannot be administered forcibly have to be bullied or cajoled into obedience. A man who will cheerfully court death on a motor-cycle will tremble before a spoonful of ammoniated quinine, while many a hardened athlete will wilt like a lily when faced with a couple of infant pills.

It is a curious thing that many people who have no faith in doctors, will yet rush blindly into the arms of patent medicine advertisers, when a genuine prescription will leave them unmoved. Such people take a morbid interest in the sufferings experienced by the great army of cured before the thrice blessed day when they purchased immunity from

Even some of our gallant defenders quail before the medicine glass, and, according to Mr. Bert Thomas, require much wifely encouragement to support them through the ordeal.

every evil under the sun with a bottle of "————'s Pills," price 2s. 3½d., which sum includes one coupon towards the dozen required to entitle you to a handsome electro-plated toast-rack or a green umbrella stand with a striking design of sunflowers.

It was the offer of a cut-glass decanter that first prompted Mrs. Bundle to invest in a bottle of "Rave's Rheumatic Cure," though she had never had anything more serious than growing pains in her life. But whereas Mr. Bundle, who was a trifle close, but a loving husband

Mr. Starr Wood recommends a clothes-peg placed on the nose as an aid to the swallowing of noxious liquids.

for all that, would have scoffed at the idea of buying a decanter, he never grudged the money for medicine.

It took twelve bottles of the cure to get rid of Mrs. Bundle's imaginary rheumatism, and collect the coupons necessary for the acquisition of the decanter. To her surprise Mr. Bundle displayed keen interest in it, and even volunteered to provide a bottle of cheap claret for supper that they might air their new possession. Supper-time came, and Mr. Bundle filled two wineglasses. His young wife, glowing with pride, lifted her glass,

"A Cure after His Own Heart"—one of the rare cases in which medicine is welcome, portrayed by Mr. Reg. F. Smith.

took a generous drink, and the next moment was struggling wildly with a mouthful of "Rave's Rheumatic Cure." Her husband, finding twelve untouched bottles in a cupboard, had seen through his wife's scheme, and the medicine closely resembling claret in appearance, had taken his revenge.

"For External Use Only"—a muddle in medicines vividly illustrated by Mr. Alfred Leete.

Our Debt to Russia.

By
F. A. McKenzie.

Few men have such an intimate knowledge of Russia and the Russians as Mr. F. A. McKenzie, the well-known war correspondent and the author of numerous books dealing with the Far East. In the following article he throws an interesting light on the part played by Russia in the war, and sums up the characteristics of the Russian Army in masterly fashion.

Mr. F. A. McKenzie, the author of the following tribute to Russia under arms.

"BLACKBEETLES!" said a Cossack officer contemptuously. "Blackbeetles, that's what we call the Prussians."

We were travelling together in the Trans-Siberian Express. A chance remark revealed the fact that my companion in the dining-car had taken prominent part in one of the early battles of the Japanese war, where I had been on the other side. This, naturally, drew us together. We started discussing old events over our *zakuskas*—the wonderful Russian *hors d'œuvre*, best in the world. By the time the *hortsch* soup had come we found ourselves in common agreement over the natural friendship between England and Russia. Then the conversation turned to Germany and the Germans. This was some time, be it noted, before the great war began.

The German Menace.

The officer repeated the term—"Blackbeetles! They crawl into our lives, they crawl into our business, they get the control of our estates, they try to fasten themselves on to all Western Russia. We know what they want. Germany and Austria mean to fight us. Every month they wait will make it more difficult for them, for Russia has learnt where she is weak and is making herself strong."

A little time later I was in Moscow, walking on the beautiful hills beyond the city, gazing down at one of the most fascinating and entrancing sights in the world, the multi-coloured walls and the golden domes of the old Russian capital glistening under the afternoon sun. My companion here was a German diplomatist. As he gazed over Moscow his face suddenly grew dark. "France and Russia mean to crush us," he said. "France waits with a dagger in her hand ready to plunge it into the heart of Germany at the first possible moment. Russia and France mean to close in on us and crush us as the two sides of the nut-cracker crush the nut. Maybe they will find this nut somewhat harder to crack than they expect!"

A Poland in Chains.

A third conversation occurs to my mind. I was talking to a Polish Professor in the ancient city of Cracow. We had mutual friends in Russia, and he was discussing the possibilities of Russia granting to her section of Poland the local freedom she desired. I need hardly remind you that Poland has been since Napoleon's days split up between Russia, Germany, and Austria. When our conversation turned to German Poland, the whole aspect of the man changed. He seemed suddenly consumed with a quiet fury, all the more terrible because it was accompanied by no outward signs of passion.

"Do you know how Germany treats our people?" he asked. "We criticise Russia, and sometimes we conspire against her, but I tell you that Russia is a miracle of kindness and justice compared with Germany in her treatment of the Poles."

The Iron Heel of the Prussian.

Then he went on to give me a narrative with names, dates, and places, which burnt itself into my brain—tales of Polish schoolboys beaten almost to death by German schoolmasters because their parents had given them a holiday on the national festival, tales of people driven from homes their families had occupied for 700 years, because Germany wanted Prussian settlers there, tales of abuses, imprisonments, mere brutal officialism, incredible had they not been supported by the hardest facts. "Wait until our people get their chance," said he. "Every German Pole, every Russian Pole, every Austrian Pole will fly to arms against Germany."

Every traveller who lived in the country around the Russian border in the days before the war knew that the war, when it came, as come it must, would be on a greater scale than anything the world had known.

The Campaign in the East.

It is difficult for people in England to realise that when the full history of the great war comes to be written half a century hence by the Allied Historical Schools of the universities of Yarkand, Peking, and Chicago, the principal volumes dealing with the first year will be devoted not to the fields of Flanders, but to the battles between the Germans and Russians.

The armies engaged in these have been counted by the million. The battles last for weeks, and cost hundreds of thousands of lives. Victory has swung now to one side and now to the other. Countrysides far greater than England have been laid to waste, and populations numbering many millions brought to overwhelming ruin.

In this eastern war the mere capture of from 10,000 to 20,000 prisoners has become a minor affair, worth only a brief mention in despatches. The loss of an army corps is treated as a regrettable incident. Time after time the Russians have seemed on the point of being overwhelmed; then when their destruction has appeared almost certain, they have turned on their advancing foes, and given them a sound trouncing. This campaign, with its ebbs and its flows, is like nothing else in modern war. It is a conflict of giants.

All Honour to the Russians.

The man in the street is, at the moment of writing, inclined to be somewhat disappointed with the Russians. Every military student, on the contrary, is full of the highest admiration for them, although he greatly regrets that their courage and military skill should so often be rendered useless by lack of munitions. The man in the street was told much last year of the Russian "steam-roller." He had a secret belief that when once the Russian army had completed its preparations and the Russian forward movement had begun, there would be an irresistible advance to Berlin that would settle the Germans once and for all. Modern wars are not fought in that way.

When Germany started hostilities Russia was not ready. Her great plan of re-organising her armies and modernising her equipment had gone far, but it had not gone far enough. Her long front, from the Baltic to Bessarabia, was open to attack at a hundred points. The Germans, ready to the last washer of their motor-cars, thought there was plenty of time to crush Belgium and to march to Paris before troubling about Russia. Paris was to be captured by August 24th, 1914. Then the Germans, their faces turned eastwards, were to over-run Poland, occupy Warsaw, and prepare for an autumn and winter advance on Moscow or Petrograd. The yards of Königsberg contained vast stores of bridge sections and railway material ready to reconstruct iron roads that the Russians might destroy in their retreat.

Saving the Situation.

The Russians knew their danger. Poland, the land of revolution, ran like a wedge

between Germany and Austria, open to attack on three sides. The goodwill of the Polish people was won for Russia by an act of brilliant statesmanship. The Russians prepared to abandon a large part of Poland for the time, even beautiful Warsaw itself, and while straightening and strengthening their front, they advanced into East Prussia.

This first Russian move cost Russia dearly, but it saved the situation in the west. The Belgians had disarranged the German time-table by the splendid defence of Liège; the English had torn it up by their fighting around Mons; the French armies from La Manche, striking on the German flank, had forced the foe back from the gates of Paris. But the crowning factor in the arrest of the German western campaign was the diversion of large parts of her troops to meet the Russian advance in East Prussia. I may be told that this advance failed. It did. The Russian army caught in the marshes of Tannenberg, unable to manœuvre its men or to handle its guns, was destroyed. But it had done its work. Europe had been rescued. It is as certain as anything can be that had Russia not struck as she did, Paris would have fallen and the whole course of the war in the west been changed.

Relieving the Pressure in the West.

Meanwhile, the Russians were striking hard hundreds of miles to the south. They defeated the Austrian armies in Galicia, occupied Lemberg, and besieged the great fortress of Przemysl. Germany was presented with the choice of helping her ally or seeing her destroyed. A large part of the German army intended for the winter campaign against France had to be diverted to save the Austrians. For the Anglo-French victories last autumn we must give credit, not only to our own brave lads, but to the Russians, who, by keeping a large portion of the enemy engaged, gave us the numerical superiority in the west which made victory possible.

Everyone knows the story of the campaigns that followed—the gigantic battle of Lodz, one of the greatest in the history of the world, when Germany and Russia fought for the possession of Central Poland, the failure of the German efforts to capture Warsaw, the amazing winter campaign on the Carpathians, the siege and capture of Przemysl, with over a hundred thousand Austrian prisoners, the rally of the Austrians, the Austrian re-occupation of Galicia, the long battle of the San, and the attempted invasion of Russia.

The Russian Surprises.

Time after time, let us admit it frankly, the Russians have appeared at the point of overwhelming successes which have not come off. Time after time, when their prospects have seemed most desperate, they have recovered quickly and in unexpected fashion. The non-military man, puzzled by events, is somewhat inclined at times to consider the Russian an uncertain factor. The very irregularities of the Russian campaign are capable, however, of a reasonable explanation.

The strength of the Russian as a fighting man lies in his great courage, his inexhaustible spirits, his physical strength, and in the fact that he never knows that he is beaten.

The Lack of Initiative.

The Slav temperament is a good one for a soldier. It gives a touch of fatalism, almost of fanaticism, and of fury in the heat of the battle which carries men far. But it has its weakness. The Russian army does not cultivate or encourage initiative in the individual soldier. I have discussed this with many Russian officers. Their attitude has always been the same. "We do not want the man in the ranks to think for himself. His superior officers will do the thinking. It is his business to obey orders." Some of the officers have admitted that they would consider the man who showed initiative in the ranks as rather dangerous than otherwise.

To-day, when war is becoming more and more a matter of machinery, this lack of initiative in the individual soldier is growingly revealing itself as a weakness. The very circumstances of the case are compelling the Russian authorities to modify their policy, but the process is costing them dearly.

Why Transport Failed.

Let me give one illustration. The great difficulty in moving a modern army of hundreds of thousands or millions of men is the question of transport. The Russians are amazingly skilled in using railways for transporting goods, but for much of the area of war the railway lines are very inadequate. It has been necessary to employ motor transport on a large scale. For some time it was impossible to obtain sufficient motors. When they were obtained, there were very few men capable of running them. Soldiers were taken from the ranks and put in charge of heavy cars.

The driver of a big military transport waggon over rough country roads requires mechanical skill and constant initiative. These newly-promoted soldiers, put to a task beyond them, made, often enough, the most disastrous failures. The smashing up of these military transports, and the consequent delay in the supply of foodstuffs and munitions of war, was one of the principal factors, time after time, in the Russian failure to reap the full fruits of early successes.

The Pressing Need for Artillery.

The next weakness of the Russians has been that they are naturally infantrymen and cavalrymen rather than artillerymen. Big guns are the final factor in this war. At point after point the Russians had inadequate artillery and inadequate stock of ammunition for what guns they had. The Austro-German campaign in Galicia in the summer of 1915 was made possible solely by the overwhelming weight of the enemy's artillery there.

All these faults are being remedied. War is the greatest of schoolmasters, and the heavily-built peasant learns to think and to think quickly in the field. His brain is put into a forcing house. Gunners can learn their craft in the fighting-line, although possibly at a somewhat heavy price. The longer Russia fights the stronger she becomes. This was shown most notably in the Japanese War when, after a year of almost continuous defeats, the Russians accumulated their reserves, took up their line in the heart of Manchuria, and for months before the proclamation of peace, held the Japanese hosts at bay.

* * * * *

Since the above was written temporary disaster has come on Russia. The great Austro-German attack has succeeded. After the most desperate and costly fighting, the Russian armies have been obliged to abandon their first line of defence. Warsaw has been occupied by the Germans. Russia has withdrawn from the Vistula, the mighty natural barrier between East and West.

A monster flanking movement is being attempted away to the north, and the German cavalry are pressing on to cut off the line of Russian retreat. They propose to fling themselves on the flanks of the Russian armies as they retire from Poland, to drive them into the swamps behind Brest-Litovsk and destroy them there.

Heavier guns and more guns, better shells and more shells have given the Germans the victory. The Russians, on the admission of their enemy, have fought with amazing tenacity and courage. They are fighting bravely still.

Remember Moscow.

Suppose for the moment that the worst takes place—that the Russian armies are outflanked and largely destroyed. Germany would then be confronted with a vast countryside, much of it marsh land, with few railways, almost incredibly difficult for the operations of an army. Russia would be able to prepare fresh hosts from Finland to the Caucasus, and from Petrograd to Vladivostok, while the advancing German forces were toiling through the bleakest, harshest winter countryside Europe knows. Napoleon learnt what it means to invade Russia, and the retreat from Moscow would be but the foreshadow of a still more terrible retreat were the attempt to be made again.

We pray that this will never be. The Russian armies, directed by the splendid military genius of the Grand Duke Nicholas and his Staff, have done so well that we can hope that they will be spared this. In a campaign of this gigantic nature, the loss or gain of great cities on the borderland—cities like Warsaw, Lemberg, and Przemysl—take comparatively minor place.

Our Debt to Russia.

Russia can lose them all, if need be, and yet be far from conquered. For a year or more she has kept millions of the Austro-German hosts engaged. For a year or more she has given France and ourselves the great opportunity of completing our mobilisation, of raising new armies, repairing our weaknesses, and supplying ourselves with sufficient munitions and guns. She has earned our undying affection, appreciation, gratitude, and respect.

✣ ✣ ✣

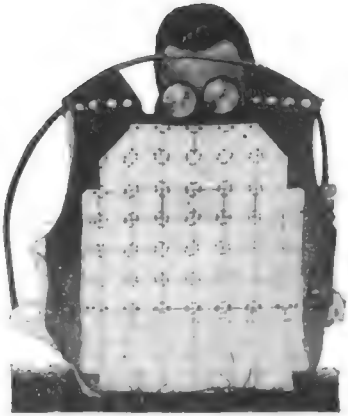


Photo. Clark & Hyde.

A bullet and bayonet screen which can be used either as a waistcoat or as a protection while taking observations.

A WAR WAISTCOAT.

An ingenious bullet and bayonet screen has recently been invented which can be worn in the form of a waistcoat, and also serves as a screen from behind which to take observations.

Both the back and front of the contrivance are lined with special steel, so that there are two thicknesses to serve as protection. When in wear it has all the appearance of an embroidered waistcoat.

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

A MAMMOTH SWIMMING BATH.

The largest open-air swimming bath in the world has lately been constructed on the sea-front at Southend, at a cost of £10,000. It contains a large bathing pool and a diving pool, while there are 128 dressing-boxes, and also special accommodation provided for clubs. Fresh water shower-baths are a very popular feature, and there is a good refreshment room in front of the ticket-office.

The bathing pool is 300 feet long and 70 feet wide, and contains about 550,000 gallons of water. Every provision is made for diving, there being two springboards, diving platforms of varying heights, and two long water chutes, while diving into the sea can also be indulged in.

The upper part of this bath is surrounded by an overhanging promenade with artificial granite balustrading, and ornamental lamp standards.

Photo. Southend and Westcliff Graphic.

A view of the enormous swimming bath recently erected on the sea-front at Southend. The overhanging promenade is a very popular feature for those who prefer to look on at the fun.

FISHING IN CHINA.

An ingenious method of fishing is that practised by some of the Chinese.

A bamboo pole is fixed into the ground near the water's edge, and to the top of the pole are fastened four light bamboo rods and a rope. To the lower ends of the bamboo rods a small mesh net is attached.

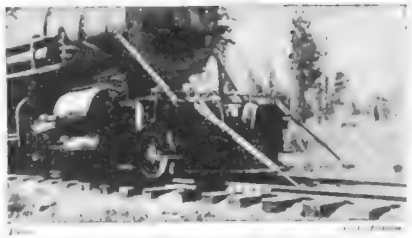
By means of the rope the fisherman lowers the pole towards the water, while the bamboo rods stretch out the net, which sinks below the surface. Bait is thrown into the water directly over the net, and the man has only to wait until a fish arrives on the scene, when he hauls up the net by means of the rope.

A Chinese method of fishing, by means of which a net is lowered into the water and the unwary fish captured when he comes for the bait.

TROUSERS OR SKIRTS?

The small boy in the rural parts of Hungary is certainly not hampered by tight garments, for his trousers are of the most generous proportions. So loosely do they hang that it is almost impossible to tell them from skirts, unless one has been previously enlightened.

In rural Hungary it is sometimes difficult to distinguish boys from girls, as their trousers are so wide that they resemble skirts.



An engine in Northern California fitted with tubes through which hot steam is forced to clear the rails of the swarms of caterpillars which invade them.

NO CHANCE FOR THE CATERPILLAR.

The caterpillar pest in Northern California was so severe during the past season that very drastic measures had to be taken, especially in the case of the engines doing duty on the lumber trains.

The railway tracks were invaded by creeping hordes of caterpillars, who found the rails a convenient path and crawled along them in thousands. The passage of the engine naturally reduced the insects to a slippery mass which prevented the wheels obtaining a grip of the metals, and so made traction impossible.

Various devices were tried without success, until an ingenious man, well-versed in railway matters, solved the problem by connecting two tubes with the engine boiler, and extending them over the rails.

Through the tubes a jet of live steam was shot as the engine progressed, and the force of the steam dislodged the insects, who were immediately killed by the heat.

In this way the lumber trains were able to proceed without difficulty, and the railway company were saved the necessity of digging trenches along their right of way, which was up till then the only known method of stopping the caterpillars' advance.

A miniature greenhouse which was made by a boy of ten, and shelters no fewer than fifty-three cacti.

A BABY GREENHOUSE.

This tiny greenhouse, which is only 36 inches in length, was the unaided work of a boy of ten, whose only tools were a hammer, a chisel, a penknife, and a glass-cutter. It was made so that, save for the front and back, ½-plate photographic plates fitted it without being cut.

The greenhouse has a door and a small locker for pots, etc., at the other end. It is put to good use, for no fewer than fifty-three cacti are grown within its panes, so that the young carpenter has every reason to be proud of his achievement.

This dog was saved from the burning village of Festubert, and brought to England. With the exception of a cat, he was the sole survivor

A DOG REFUGEE.

It is not only human beings who have marvellous escapes in time of war, for this little dog was rescued from the burning village of Festubert, near La Bassée, and brought home to Scarborough by an English officer.

This dog and a cat were the only creatures left alive in the village by the Germans, and their escape was probably accidental. The dog is now in comfortable quarters at Scarborough, and judging from his appearance quite approves of the land of his adoption, and is suffering no ill effects from the terrible experiences he has been through.

SOMETHING LIKE A SAND STORM.

A sand storm, or "hubub," in Egypt is no laughing matter, for it entirely obscures the sun and renders everything pitch dark, while covering the place with fine sand.

When these sand storms are on—and they occur pretty frequently—it is impossible to go out of doors, and is often necessary to fasten tightly every door and window until the storm has passed, which may not be for three or four hours. Even sunny climes have their disadvantages, for a "hubub" must be worse than the rain we are so fond of abusing.

Photo. W. C. Berg.

This is not a picture of a mountain, but of one of the sand storms, or "hububs," which occur in Egypt with unpleasant frequency.

DOING HIS BIT

By OWEN OLIVER

'The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

His name according to the Attestation Paper was William Smith, but it is possible that an over-worked recruiting staff made a mistake about that, as Smith's company declared they had about his other particulars. He was alleged to be flat-footed, lacking a tooth of the minimum *quantum*, an inch under chest measurement, half-an-inch under height, and a trifle short in intellectual stature. He denied mental shortcoming, but for his physical deficiencies he made no apology. He had blown himself out and stood on tiptoe, he said, because he meant to get in the Army and do his bit. "Do a Bit" was what his friends (he had no enemies) in the company called him.

They tried mercifully to get the "poor little chap" left behind at the depot when the battalion was ordered to the front. His sergeant told him that he mustn't be disappointed if he didn't get in the first batch, but was moved by his entreaties to leave his fate to the Captain. The Captain put him in the list for the Adjutant to strike out. The Adjutant called him up, and expressed doubts about his physique, but the little man pleaded as if he begged for life.

"I'm stronger than I look, sir," he urged, "and I'm not so much the worst shot in the company. I'll do my bit."

The Adjutant's keen eyes softened for a moment. He knew what they called 2307, Private William Smith, and he liked men who wanted to do their bit.

"You're the smallest mark, anyhow," he said, as if he made an excuse to himself. "All right! I'll put you on the list."

The burly Second-in-Command remonstrated with the Adjutant.

"He's a weedy little beggar," he objected. "I don't know how the recruiting officer came to pass him."

"I expect he was thundering anxious to be passed," the Adjutant suggested, and the Second-in-Command passed him too.

The Colonel was the next obstacle. He lifted his pen to strike 2307, Private William Smith, off the roll.

"Why the deuce have you put that little rat down, Lane?" he enquired of the Adjutant. "He'll never stand it. Goodness knows how he ever passed in."

"He's so anxious to 'do his bit,' as he calls it," the Adjutant explained. "His keenness is rather an example to the others. The little beggar nearly cried at the idea of being left behind. They call him 'Do a Bit.' It's his gospel."

"Umph!" the Colonel grunted. "It isn't a bad name for a chap." And he withdrew the hovering pen.

The fierce, grey-moustached General who inspected the battalion singled out "Do a Bit" for comment.

"Haven't you anything bigger?" he asked the Colonel. "Is he a special shot or anything?"

"The special thing about him," the Colonel explained, "is that he's the keenest private in the battalion to go, and they're all keen."

"Well," admitted the General, "that's not a bad qualification."

So "Do a Bit" went to France, and tramped forward to the Belgian border, discussing eagerly the bit that he was going to do. He defined it as killing a German and a half before a German killed him.

"If every chap does that," he asserted, "we win, allowing that the French and the

Russians kill one for one. I got the numbers out of a paper I bought just before we left England, and worked it out at the end of my pay-book."

"That's all very well, my son," Corporal Nokes objected, "but how about the poor devils who get pipped before they've pipped anyone?"

"Someone else must manage an extra bit," the little man said. "You can't expect everyone to do the exact number. It's an average."

"Don't get airing your French on me," Nokes told him. "It's blooming nonsense. You can't kill half anyone."

"He means half kill him," big Brown explained with a wink. "If anyone half killed you, you'd *'ave a rage!* That's what he means!"

They knew perfectly well what "Do a Bit" meant, but they liked to draw the little man.

"What do you count for that cow you hit yesterday?" the Joker asked him. There was no reason to suppose that "Do a Bit" was the culprit, except that he was the likeliest man to fire wide enough!

"I'll begin counting before we're at Brussels!" he declared cheerfully. He was very cheerful then, for they were close on the borders, and had exchanged a little sniping with the enemy in the afternoon. That was when the cow fell, and there was fresh meat that evening.

The little man's spirits began to fall a day or so later, when the strategic retreat commenced without his having been properly in action. He protested against the movement, so far as breath allowed, even while he ran.

"It's a wrong principle," he declared. "Don't talk to me about outflanking, and all that sort of thing. Why shouldn't you be outflanked?"

"If you get outflanked, you get surrounded, you jabbering idiot," the Sergeant told him. He wasn't generally rude to "Do a Bit," but the strategic retreating made him very angry, though he pretended to approve of it. The Captain had told him that he must defend it to the men. (The Captain himself was angry, if the Sergeant had only known.)

"If you get surrounded," "Do a Bit" protested, "you're bound to hit someone!"

The Captain asked what the something they saw to laugh at, but when they told him, he laughed too.

"It's his only chance of hitting anybody!" he remarked; and he told the Colonel and the Second-in-Command.

The Colonel said, "I'd like to give him the chance!" He loved strategic retreating no more than his men did. The Second reined his horse in till he was alongside "Do a Bit."

"If you're surrounded," he explained, "you get wiped out."

"That doesn't matter," "Do a Bit" replied, "does it, sir, if you wipe out one and a half for one? I worked out at the end of my pay-book that if we did that we were bound to win, allowing the Allies one for one."

"Umph!" the Major said. "*Umph!* . . . That's what you call doing your bit, eh? That's all very well for plain soldiers like you and me, Smith, but a Colonel aims at getting two or two and a half for one, and a General wants three or four! That's strategy. I don't want you men to think we're retiring because we don't believe that you fellows could fight against odds. It's because our Generals are planning out how to fight to greater advantage, so as to get *more* than one and a half for one. We can trust them to give us our chance to 'do a bit,' when the right time comes. Don't give yourself up for a German and a half, Smith. Lay out to have two or three or four. . . . Double across this open part men, and get to those bushes. They're not far behind on the left. Hi, Bruce! Cover that gap with the machine-gun!"

"You look thoughtful, matey," Taffy Jones told "Do a Bit" when they came to a halt at last, principally because their legs refused to be strategic any longer.

"I was planning," the little man confessed, "how to get more than one and a half for one."

"Take all the cover you can find," the Welshman advised, "and hold your fire and mark your man. Feel that notch on my stock, matey? I nicked it when we were skirmishing in front of Mons. I made sure of one then."

"That's all very well for you, Taffy," the little man objected. "You're the best shot in the company, but I never hit anything, and if I came to close quarters with a German he might knock me out first, like you fellows do, at bayonet practice. If I'm going to get my bit in, I'll have to do it by strategy, like the Generals. I'm trying to think out a plan."

"Well," Taffy said, "I'm trying to go to sleep. So you can plan it quiet, my son."

He stretched out on the ground and was asleep as soon as he lay down, but "Do a

Bit" sat with his chin on his hand and stared at the stars for a long, long time. He had fallen asleep sitting so, when the attack came a little before the dawn.

It was only an advance party who attacked them, and they were beaten off quickly, but a gun firing shells was still worrying them when the sun came up. Then Taffy and Nokes and the Adjutant, who had crept forward to some bushes in the half light, worried the gunners till there were none left to fire it, and then they came back at a run to report that a whole army was coming. The Colonel gave orders to prepare to retire at the double.

"Put the slightly wounded in the carts," he commanded, "those who've got a chance. We can't take the rest, but lay them well away from the bridge. B Company has the post of honour this morning to cover the retreat. They will blow up the bridge as they go."

"The brook's almost dry," the Second commented. "The enemy can get over easily anywhere. Is it worth risking our rearguard to destroy the bridge?"

"Yes," the Colonel decided. "The brook will delay their waggons—the ammunition and all that sort of thing, you know. Look sharp with the wounded there. We must get off."

"Right, sir," Surgeon-Captain Macpherson acknowledged. He was rapidly examining the wounded to see which had the best chance of recovery, and therefore the best claim to be taken in one of the two carts. They would hold about twenty, and forty men were too much injured to walk.

He decided upon most of the cases at a glance, but he knelt down to examine "Do a Bit." He had an ugly wound in the stomach, but he was talking cheerfully and asserting that it wasn't half as bad as it looked. However, when the surgeon rose, he shook his head and walked on to the next case. The Adjutant touched his arm.

"He's only a little one," he suggested. "We could stow him in. It isn't so much of a wound. It won't kill him."

The Medical Officer shook his head again.

"The wound itself won't," he said, "but Nature will."

"He seems all right," the Adjutant protested.

"I know, I know. He will be for a few hours, till he eats perhaps. Some of the intestines are cut through. There's no stopping blood-poisoning. In a hospital one might, but not here. It's no use, Lane. He's booked."

The wounded man caught the verdict and groaned.

"And I haven't done my bit!" he bewailed.

Taffy squatted down beside him, and pushed the butt of his rifle into his hands.

"Feel the nicks, old pal," he said. "They're only what I'm *sure* of . . . Six. That's three apiece for you and me, chum. Good average!"

"It makes it all the worse for me!" the little man almost sobbed. "I haven't hit one."

"You must have hit lots," Taffy assured him, "and didn't know."

"'Tain't likely," "Do a Bit" denied. "I knew all along I couldn't do my bit by shooting. I was planning to do it by—what do you call it?—strategy. That's the word! It means more than one and a half for one . . . I was thinking . . ." He closed his eyes.

"Have a drink, matey," Taffy proposed, and held his water-bottle to the parched lips. The Colonel came along just then. He paused beside them.

"Well, my man," he said. "You've done your bit."

"I haven't, sir," "Do a Bit" protested hoarsely. "I fired a lot, but I don't believe I hit anyone. I never do!"

"I'm sure you did," the Colonel told him. "You've done your best, anyhow, and that's all any of us can do. Good-bye, Smith. I shall remember you as a good and keen soldier."

He strode on, but "Do a Bit" called after him.

"Sir! . . . Sir!"

The Colonel turned back.

"I've thought of a way to do my bit. Let me fire the mine!"

The Colonel frowned a trifle. The request struck him as childish, and there was no time to waste, but he liked the funny little man.

"I think the rearguard had better do that," he said. "You see you're wounded, and we mustn't make a mistake. Besides, blowing up the bridge wouldn't kill your man and a half, you know; only delay their ammunition a little. . . ."

"I could blow it up when their ammunition was on it," "Do a Bit" proposed with hoarse excitement. "Perhaps one cart blowing up would explode a lot more. I've been thinking it out while I've lain here.

They'd see I was wounded and not trouble about me."

"They'd see the wire, my poor chap!" the Colonel said. "The mine's under the bridge, and they wouldn't notice that, but——"

"Lay the wire in the brook," "Do a Bit" begged, "and put me by the edge, as if I'd gone for a drink. I'd dangle my arm in."

The Colonel drew a quick breath.

"The wire isn't very long," he remarked. "If a lot of the ammunition blows up . . ."

"Do a Bit" laughed.

"I've got to go anyhow," he explained. "It will be more than one and a half for one!"

The Colonel's stern eyes flickered for a moment.

"You shall do your bit," he promised. "You're a man!"

They laid the wire as "Do a Bit" suggested, and carried him to the edge of the brook. He dangled his hand in the water, and they put something in his hand. He had only to press it hard they said, and the trick would be done.

"You'll have done your bit, and a bit over for the British Army!" the Colonel told him.

"Good old Army!" "Do a Bit" muttered. His breath was short since they had moved him.

The Colonel saluted him stiffly.

"I leave you in command here!" he said. Then he went. At the bridge he turned to have another look at the lonely commander, but the Adjutant almost lifted him on to his horse. The heads of the enemy's cavalry could be seen over the rise behind. The rear company went at something quicker than a double, the Colonel riding just beside them, and refusing to go faster than they.

There was firing from behind now. "Do a Bit" saw a few of his comrades fall. He counted them. One . . . two . . . three . . . four. . . . They were at the rise ahead. . . . Five . . . six. . . . Some men had come back for the last two. . . . They were over the rise now with them.

He felt faint for a minute. When the faintness passed he could hear the tramp of the enemy coming from behind, and soon he could feel the ground shaking with them. Presently an advance guard of cavalry clattered up to the bridge. He was tempted to squeeze what was in his hand then, but if he did, his "bit" would only be ten or a dozen for one. He must wait for the ammunition column.

The cavalry crossed the bridge, spread out rapidly, and cantered up the rise to reconnoitre. A battalion of infantry had reached the bridge now, and were crossing four abreast. If he closed his hand hard now he might blow up fifty or even a hundred. . . . That was better than blowing up an ammunition waggon or two, if they did not blow up the others, and the Colonel didn't seem sure that they would, and this waiting was getting on his nerves.

"What's that got to do with it?" he asked himself scornfully. "My nerves haven't got much more work anyhow. May as well play 'em out! Got him!" He grinned to see one of the scouting German cavalrymen roll off his saddle as he mounted the rising ground. "I bet that was Anderson—he's the best shot in B Company—or the Adjutant. He's the best shot in the battalion. Six nicks, Taffy had. I'm going to have more. Where are these blighters coming now?"

He was about to turn his head to look, but remembered that he must not move, but pretend to be unconscious. So he lay like a log while enemy after enemy tramped by. They were too many for all to pass by the bridge. Company after company marched by him on either side, splashing through the brook.

"Lor'," he thought, "it's more than a brigade. It's a division, if it isn't a whole army! And I'm one British soldier, and a little one, and never much good. Well, they can't march for nuts. Sloppy German swabs! And I hold an army in my hand."

One ruffian gave him a push with his foot. It moved him upon his wound, and that hurt horribly, horribly! But he did not groan. He would not move or groan even when it hurt worse and worse, only he wished that the ammunition column would be quick and come. It should be a big one for such a huge force. Already the front line of infantry had reached the rise and was passing over. If his chaps waited and used the machine-gun they would have one and a half for one! But that was only a private's strategy, and now he was an officer in command.

Another brute pushed him aside with his foot. His head was touching the water. If someone pushed him right in he would have to "press the button" then, before the ammunition had come. He sweated for fear of that.

Surely that was a rumbling of carts? No, guns. He could blow up a gun or two now.

He'd wait for the middle of the column as far as he could judge, and then . . . . "If it blows up the lot," he thought as he closed his hand on the wire, "I shan't know anything of what happens." And he didn't. [Page 528, col. 2.]

Not good enough he decided. He must wait; but he was getting faint. Suppose he fainted before the ammunition came? Had he lost himself for a moment then? He must have, for the guns were over. Two batteries, and he had only seen one cross the bridge. More artillery. He was very faint now. He couldn't hold on much longer. Had he better make sure of what was crossing now? It was over. More guns . . . guns . . . guns . . . No! Ammunition waggons and strong companies marching on either side. He'd wait for the middle of the column as far as he could judge, and then——

He took a last look at the sky that was beginning to turn from grey to blue, at the green trees, sniffed the air, recollected disjointedly part of a verse from his school poetry-book.

"For who . . . left the warm precincts of the cheerful day . . . . Nor cast one . . . look behind. . . ."

He cast a look behind to judge how the ammunition column stood to the bridge. He would take the next waggon for the middle one.

"If it blows up the lot," he thought as he closed his hand on the wire, "I shan't know anything of what happens."

And he didn't.

* * * * *

The Colonel halted the battalion behind a hedge.

"We must stop the cavalry and those four guns," he said, "at all costs. Once they head us we're done."

The Second-in-Command nodded.

"Done anyhow, old man," he remarked in a whisper.

"Yes," the Colonel whispered back. "Anyhow. I know. This is the best place to sell ourselves dear."

"One and a half for one," said the Second, "and a bit more, if it weren't for those infernal guns. Here comes a shell *Keep low, boys.* It's short. That's over us. *That isn't.*"

"The sharpshooters I named will try to pick off the gunners," the Colonel ordered sharply. "The rest will hold their fire."

The Adjutant took a rifle from a man who was hit, and he and a couple of dozen marksmen aimed and fired carefully. Nokes was one of them. Presently he made a notch on the butt of his rifle. It was on the other side to the previous nicks. He was starting a separate score for "Do a Bit." "The little man would like it better than an average," he thought.

"Fire at the cavalry, the rest of you," the Colonel commanded, "or they'll get round. That's one gun silenced. Lord! Four more batteries! And more behind. We're done, barring miracles."

And then the miracle happened—an explosion that jarred them into stupor for some seconds, though it was a mile away. The enemy's cavalry wheeled round and galloped back and the batteries ceased their advance. Their officers were pointing back to their army and a huge black cloud was rising in the air."

"Smith's done it!" the Colonel said hoarsely. "It will delay them for a quarter-of-an-hour. Run boys and form up again at that village. Run, boys! Run!"

The village was on the top of a little hill. Looking forward from it the Colonel saw a French division coming to their rescue. Looking back he saw a halting army, and behind it a field strewed with men and horses and broken vehicles and dismounted guns.

"Boys," he said, "he's there, and they're there, and we're here. He's done his bit!"

GEORGETTE.

If the day is dull or dreary, and she's feeling rather blue,
She will twist her little mouth into a fascinating *moue*,
And open wide her big, soft eyes, and steal a glance at you;

Which means: "It's simply awfully slow" (just here a heavy sigh),
"And if something do: sn't happen, I shall give it up and die,
For I've nobody to love me" (smile) "unless *you'd* like to try!"

X.

OUT OF RANGE!

A Highlander with bagpipes entered the street and commenced his plaintive lay, at the same time marching up and down in time-honoured fashion.

"Why does he move about all the time he plays?" asked Johnny of his father.

"I don't know," answered the lad's father wearily, "unless it is to prevent me getting the range with the inkpot."

* * * * *

ALL ALONG THE LINE.

Sam was employed on an engineering job, a few miles out of the city, and was carried to his work by an express train, which accommodatingly slowed up near the scene of his labours. One morning, however, the train rushed through the cut without reducing speed, and the foreman of the job looked in vain for Sam. At last he saw a much-battered workman limping back down the line, and called to him:

"Hallo, Sam! Where did you get off?"

Sam turned stiffly, and, waving his hand toward the steep embankment, sighed:

"Oh, all along here!"

* * * *

LITERALLY TRUE.

EDYTHE: "Did the Duke say he loved you?"

CLYTE: "He said he loved the ground I walked on."

EDYTHE: "Where were you when he said it?"

CLYTE: "Out visiting papa's gold mine."

GIVING HER AWAY.

Maud was entertaining Mr. West, and little Sydney was hanging about. At last Maud told him it was time for him to go to bed.

"Oh, can't I stay up a little longer?" pleaded Sydney.

"What do you want to sit up for?" asked Maud.

"Why, I want to see you and Mr. West play cards," answered Sydney.

"But we are not going to play cards," said Maud.

"Why," replied Sydney, surprised, "mother said you were. I heard her tell you that everything depended on the way you played your cards to-night."

* * * * *

FIGURES GUARANTEED.

"The one thing we demand from our employés," said the head of the office staff, "is correctness in figures."

The applicant smoothed her pleated skirt complacently.

"I have never had any complaints on that score," she replied demurely.

BLACK CAT (to harassed friend): "With black kittens, my dear, you save such a lot of cleaning. They only need washing twice a week."

HOW THE COMPOSER FOUND INSPIRATION:

1. Mr. Treble, being hard up, seeks to produce a masterpiece that shall astonish the musical world—

2. —but finally gives up the attempt and goes to bed.

SNORERS BOTH.

JONES: "My wife and I suffer from alternate insomnia."

BROWN: "Alternate insomnia! What's that?"

JONES: "Whichever gets to sleep first keeps the other awake all night by snoring."

• • •

A GENTLE HINT.

A stingy angler was fishing on a Scottish loch on a drenching day. He had been consoling himself from his flask and forgetting his gillie. Presently he asked the man if there was a dry place on the boat on which to strike a match.

"You might try my throat," said the gillie; "it's dry enough."

• • • • •

A MAN OF TASTE.

"Oh, yes!" she remarked, in reply to her incredulous friend's question, "I changed doctors quite a long time ago—before Christmas, in fact."

"But I thought you had such confidence in Dr. Healem?"

"Oh, so I had! But he's getting so frightfully old-fashioned, you know. Perhaps you remember me telling you how terribly I felt the cold last winter?"

"Yes."

"Well, I went to Dr. Healem about it, and he told me to wear flannel. Flannel, if you please!"

"Yes."

"So I went to Dr. Nicely. *He* suggested sealskin!"

A PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATION.

Yells from the nursery brought the mother, who found the baby gleefully pulling small Billy's curls.

"Never mind, darling," she comforted. "Baby doesn't know how it hurts."

Half-an-hour later, wild shrieks from the baby made her run again to the nursery.

"Why, Billy!" she cried, "what is the matter with baby?"

"Nothing, muzzer," said Billy calmly; "only now he knows!"

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THE LAST RITES.

A city man who was making an effort to cross a busy street had dodged an electric tram, squirmed out of the way of a taxi-cab by the skin of his teeth, and was just setting his foot on the opposite pavement with a sigh of relief, when a descending monoplane bore down on him.

"Has a pedestrian no rights these days?" cried the poor fellow, dodging this way and that.

"Certainly he has—funeral rites," answered the aviator as he volplaned heavily down on the man's head.

• • •

MADE TO ORDER.

A foreigner who wanted to compliment an English general by saying, "You were born to command," not being very sure of our language, looked the words up in a dictionary.

Then, turning to the General, he said, very solemnly:

"Sir, you were made to order."

3. His slumbers are disturbed by the neighbours' cats, who, in settling old scores, invade his bedroom—

"TOURED-TO-DEATH."

The line of carriages came to a standstill before an hotel in Rome, and a swarm of weary, hot, and dusty tourists scrambled down on to the pavement. They were all members of a personally-conducted party—the famous "Seeing Europe in Twenty Days for £10" excursion.

Mrs. Brown was one of the last to alight, her face flushed, her bonnet awry, her nerves almost completely shattered. Miss Brown, however, was still full of energy.

Seizing her mother's arm, she asked:

"Mother, where are we now? Is this Rome?"

The answer came in a tired, "toured-to-death" tone of voice:

"What day of the week is it, my dear?"

"Tuesday. Why?"

"Well, look at the printed schedule. If this is Tuesday, it must be Rome!"

* * * * *

SHAM SKIRMISHES.

"I don't know whether I ought to take you seriously or not," said the fair young thing to the gallant officer who had just proposed. "I've heard that you were engaged to ten girls last summer."

"My dear, those weren't real engagements. They were just — er — sham skirmishes."

* * *

SHE KNEW HER VALUE.

MAID: "What wages do you pay, mum?"

MISTRESS: "I'm willing to pay you whatever you are worth."

MAID: "I've never worked for as little as that, mum, and won't now. Good mornin,' mum."

5. The next day sees him hard at work at a marvellous composition—

6. —and fight out their differences on the piano, producing a medley of sound that gives Mr. Treble the necessary inspiration.

6. —which brings him fabulous offers from music publishers and puts him in the front rank of composers.

BRICKS AND BUTTER.

The bricklayer was a source of great interest to little Tommy. He had never seen anything like him, and when he took up his trowel to apply more mortar, Tommy's excitement knew no bounds.

"Oh, mummy," he cried, "look at that man buttering bricks!"

* * *

THE VETERAN.

"See here, Jean," said the new arrival at the hotel, "do you mean to tell me that this egg is fresh?"

"Eet was when eet was laid, monsieur," replied the waiter.

"And when was that, pray?" demanded the guest.

"Alas, monsieur, I cannot tell! replied Jean. "This is my first season here."

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PLAIN FACTS.

SHE: "We women are all misunderstood."

HE: "Well, you never saw one who tried to make herself plain, did you?"

* * * * *

OVERDRAWN.

BANKER: "Allow me to call your attention, sir, to the fact that your account is £100 overdrawn."

CUSTOMER: "Indeed! That means that I have £100 of yours, doesn't it?"

BANKER: "Yes."

CUSTOMER: "Well, look here, last week you had £150 of mine, and I didn't say anything about it."

FIRST SCOUT: "Yaiks! What's on at the school to-night?"
SECOND SCOUT: "That's the Cricket Club Committee! They're going to decide who's to have the hay off the pitch."

PROOF POSITIVE.

A little girl had a pet kitten which died, to the intense woe of its small mistress. By way of comforting her in her affliction, the other children arranged a grand funeral, which was duly carried out.

That night a heavy storm of rain set in, and next day nothing would satisfy the child till she was permitted to make a pilgrimage to the kitten's tomb. Presently she rushed back in a very passion of tears and sobs.

"What is it, my darling?" tenderly asked her mother.

"Oh, my kitty! She hasn't gone to heaven."

"How do you know, darling?"

"I saw her tail sticking out," sobbed the child pitifully.

• • •

COULDN'T RISK IT.

CITY MAGNATE (to young husband): "Why has your wife decided to give up the European trip she was contemplating?"

YOUNG HUSBAND: "She happened to hear somebody say that travel broadened one."

• • • •

FORETHOUGHT.

"You might let me have the car for a few hours, uncle."

"All right, my boy, you can have it."

"And I say, can you let me have the price of a couple of fines or so?"

"WATCH YOUR STEP!"

A young constable joined the police force in Scotland, and in the course of duty found it essential to arrest a very old offender.

Arrived at the police station the policeman ushered him into the cells with the caution:

"Mind the step."

"Gae awa', man," said the prisoner, looking at the other contemptuously. "I kent the step afore ye was born."

• •

CHILDREN FREE!

SOLOMON (to conductor): "How much will it cost to take mine leetle Joseph to the city? He is only von year old."

CONDUCTOR: "Oh! he will go for nothing."

SOLOMON: "And Rebecca? She is two-and-a-half."

CONDUCTOR: "She will go free too."

SOLOMON: "Right! Vill you oblige by putting them down at Merton Square? I vill valk."

COLONEL OF YOUTHFUL VOLUNTEERS: "Toothache! 'E's tryin' to make out 'e's been to the Front. That's what it is—the swanker!"

HOW FALSE REPORTS ARISE.

1. Florence announces the news that she has seen an aeroplane to her bosom friend—

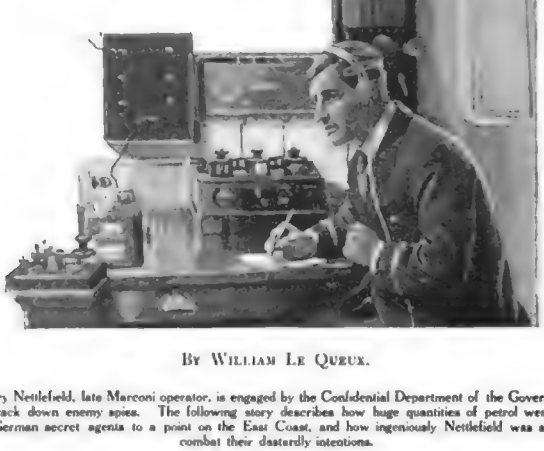
2. —who retails the fact (with additions) to her young brother.

3. Father and mother receive the news in a highly embroidered state —

4. — and all that Florence had really seen was a harmless bird taking his daily exercise.

ANOTHER THRILLING SPY STORY.

BEHIND LOCKED DOORS



By William Le Queux.

Harry Nettlefield, late Marconi operator, is engaged by the Confidential Department of the Government to track down enemy spies. The following story describes how huge quantities of petrol were run by German secret agents to a point on the East Coast, and how ingeniously Nettlefield was able to combat their dastardly intentions.

"I THINK that's the man!" whispered Clotilde Atherton quickly as we alighted, one afternoon in May, at the station of the sleepy little town of ———, in Norfolk.

The person she indicated was a tall, thin-faced, rather lantern-jawed man, with furtive, narrow-set eyes and a grey, pointed beard. In a Homburg hat and a suit of heather tweeds, he looked a typical country squire.

"Mr. Nettlefield?" he exclaimed, as he advanced to greet me, and next moment I had introduced Mr. Benwell, as I will call him, though the name is fictitious, to Clotilde.

In any preliminary inquiries regarding the activity of German secret agents in our midst, I frequently found it advantageous, in order to avert suspicion, to take Clotilde, my *fiancée*, with me, more especially because her naturally feminine intuition and foresight often proved most valuable.

After a few words together, we all three walked out into the station-yard, where Mr. Benwell's car—a brown-painted limousine—was awaiting us, and very soon we were out on the Cromer road, upon which we travelled until we came to a small, out-of-the-world hamlet, and, half-a-mile further on, turned into a long, gravelled drive and alighted before a large, comfortable-looking, ivy-covered house, which we entered, being duly introduced to Mrs. Benwell.

Not, however, till all four of us were in the cosy smoking-room, with the door closed, did our host mention the reason he had invited me down from London.

"The facts are quite simple," he said, without much preliminary. "I will put the problem before you as I know it. You, a professional hunter of spies, will, no doubt, be able to arrive at a solution of it. Having carefully studied the deep-laid plans of Germany prior to the invasion of Belgium and France, and seen how everything had been long prepared for the occupation of those countries—the horde of secret agents who acted as guides to the advancing armies, the ready-made gun-emplacements, the

accurate knowledge of the existence of horses and supplies, the military capacity of every road, and the strategic advantage of every point—I saw plainly that, if such preparations had been made in Belgium, so also would similar preparations be made in Great Britain, and even on a greater scale."

"There I quite agree," I said.

"It is for this reason I wrote to the Intelligence Department of the War Office," he went on. "My previous chauffeur, a man named Cane, left me last January in order to better himself, and subsequently obtained a situation at a garage in the town of "—he named a place I will call Twiningham—"some miles from here, a small concern run by a youngish, rather independent man named "—he gave me the name, but here I am compelled to refer to him as X—"who had once or twice done repairs for me.

"One evening, about a month ago, Cane called here and asked to see me privately. When I saw him alone in this room he at first seemed to hesitate, but at last he appeared to make a sudden resolve, and told me a story which has set me thinking deeply ever since."

"You had better tell Mr. Nettlefield all the very curious circumstances, just as we know them," interrupted his wife.

"I will," said Mr. Benwell, and then, with minute detail, he told us facts of which the following is a brief statement:

The man Cane confessed to his late master certain suspicions which had been aroused in his mind regarding unusual quantities of petrol which had passed through his employer's hands. He calculated roughly that, during the months of February and March, nearly twenty-five thousand gallons of petrol had been purchased from various sources, and had passed through the garage to some destination unknown.

"That represents a considerable sum of money," I remarked, at once interested.

"Certainly—and more capital than Mr. X—— could command," replied our informant. "Now the question is, where has it gone?"

"Seawards, no doubt."

"That was Cane's opinion."

"Did Mr. Cane actually see the tins of petrol come into the garage?" asked Clotilde, at once keen to ascertain every fact known.

"Of course he did," was our host's reply. "He pretended to take no notice of it, while the man X——, in order to ingratiate himself with his servant, gave him high wages and treated him almost as an equal."

"A very curious story," I remarked, "but has Cane no idea to what destination the petrol has gone?"

"It has either gone down to the sea for German submarines, or else it has gone down to the salt marshes around Wells and Cley-next-the-Sea, into certain secret depots in readiness for the landing of the enemy on the East Coast."

"Will they land—can they ever land?" queried Clotilde.

"My opinion is in the affirmative, Miss Atherton," was the lantern-jawed man's response. And I here confess that I entirely agreed with him. We, at Whitehall, well knew that, for the past nine months, over two hundred thousand fresh troops, with all their complement of transports, had been kept ready in the Elbe for the purpose of an attack on the English coast.

We knew, too, that, owing to the foresight of the German War Staff in sending out the wireless message to the German mercantile marine six hours before the official declaration of war, the majority of Germany's ships were able to seek neutral harbours, and many of them got back to German ports in order to be fitted as transports to convey the German expeditionary force to England.

"However," I went on, "my one concern is solely the destination of all this petrol, as well as the loyalty of this man X——. Is anything known of his antecedents?"

"Nothing in particular," was Mr. Benwell's reply. "Inquiries I made in Twiningham show that, five years ago, he was in the employ of a motor firm at "—he named a town in Suffolk—"and when he came to Twiningham he set up in business in a very modest way with one car. Before three years had elapsed he had bought four cars, moved into a large house, married, and kept two servants."

"Which is evidence of sudden wealth—perhaps from a mysterious source."

"That's exactly my suspicion," was my host's reply.

"But cannot I see this man Cane?" I suggested. "I'd like to question him."

Mr. Benwell looked at me curiously, and, after a moment's hesitation, replied:

"Unfortunately, that is impossible."

"Why? Is he averse from giving information?"

"No. The fact is, Mr. Nettlefield, that he is dead."

"Dead!" I echoed.

"Yes. He died suddenly in London ten days ago."

I gazed in some surprise at the man seated before me.

"That's curious, to say the least. What were the circumstances?" I inquired.

"Well, he had been over here to report further to me on Sunday evening, and had ridden his motor-cycle back to Norwich just before dusk. The next I knew was from a paragraph in the paper saying that he had, two days later, been found dead in the Thames close to Hammersmith Bridge. An inquest had been held, and an open verdict returned."

"You didn't attend the inquest?" I asked.

"No, because I had no idea it had been held, until afterwards."

"There may have been foul play," I remarked reflectively.

"That's exactly my suspicion," was the reply. "Curiously enough, after he had gone on that Sunday evening, the housekeeper reported to my wife that a strange man had been seen lurking about by one of the servants on returning from her evening off. He was lounging near the entrance-gate, as though awaiting someone."

"Well?" I asked.

"This made me wonder if the man had not crept noiselessly over the lawn up to this window, and had overheard our conversation, after the blind had been pulled down."

"And you think that the enemy, establishing the fact that the man Cane had brought you information, then contrived to lure him to his death in London?"

Mr. Benwell nodded in the affirmative.

Clotilde exchanged glances with me. I could see that she held our host's suspicion of foul play.

"Then the man X—— will be on his guard against you?" I said to Mr. Benwell, a suggestion in which he at once acquiesced.

Our preliminary talk was not without interest. In the course of it I learnt many things. The chauffeur, Cane, had, it appeared, fallen in love with a local girl, the daughter of a labourer at the mill; she had been engaged at a pastrycook's, but, according to what Cane had told his old employer, she had gone to London, and for the past month he had been unable to ascertain her address.

Was there, I wondered, any connection with the disappearance of the girl and the mysterious death of her lover?

Certainly the whole affair was a tangle of suspicion and mystery.

That same evening, accompanied by Clotilde, I called at the garage in Twiningham, saw Mr. X——, and engaged a car to take us to Ipswich, whence I intended to return by train to Liverpool Street.

I did this purposely, in order to ascertain what kind of man it was who could deal with twenty-five thousand gallons of petrol within two months.

He was smartly dressed, about thirty-two, rather slim, with a fair moustache and somewhat square chin. Extremely polite, he seemed most anxious to please. Unfortunately, however, all his men were out driving, he told us. But he would drive himself.

This was exactly what we wanted, because, before we made our plans, I would have to present a detailed report to the Chief at Whitehall, and in that report it was necessary to show some good ground for suspicion.

Charles X—— I found to be quite a genial man and an excellent driver, but he still maintained his chauffeur's manner. I stopped purposely at a wayside hotel and had some food, after which I took the opportunity of chatting with him regarding cars and petrol. Had I been alone I should have ridden beside him, but to leave Clotilde in the back of the car might have aroused suspicion.

I, however, succeeded in our brief chat in obtaining from him the name of the oil company with whom he dealt, and for that day my inquiry ended.

Next day I was early astir. After presenting my report at the Intelligence Department, I had an interview with the coroner who had held the inquest on the body of the young man Cane.

"It was certainly a strongly suspicious case," he told me, after he had referred to the depositions of witnesses he had taken. "But no marks of violence were found upon the body, which it was supposed had been in the water about twelve hours. The police theory was that the deceased had been walking along the towing-path towards Barnes, and had slipped into the river near to the reservoir at Castelnau. He was identified by a man who had seen him in a public-house in Hammersmith the worse for drink earlier in the evening."

That point was curious, as Mr. Benwell had told me most distinctly that his ex-chauffeur was a teetotaller.

My next inquiry was at the head office of

the company which X—— had told me supplied him with petrol. After searching the books and analyses which the company keep, the manager courteously told me that it was true that Charles X—— was a customer—but only to a very limited extent.

I then tried a rival oil company, only to find that the suspected man's name was not upon their books, and from further inquiries I confess I began to doubt the dead man's story.

The one highly mysterious fact, one which lent considerable colour to it, was that he should have met with such an untimely end so quickly after making his statement to his late employer.

Within a week I had succeeded in tracing the girl Wilson, whom I found employed in a sweet-shop in Hackney. She knew nothing of the young man's death until I told her, and then it was quite apparent to me that long ago they had had a quarrel, and she had taken a situation and gone to London without his knowledge, in order to avoid him further. So once again I drew a blank.

Time after time I discussed the affair in confidence with Clotilde, for she often came up from her father's at Esher and called upon me at my little flat in Vernon Chambers.

I should have given up the matter and dismissed it as an exaggeration—for the Department receives so many lurid and exaggerated stories that it is extremely difficult to discern the fiction from the truth—yet my well-beloved still urged me to continue. She expressed herself certain that, though I had failed to ascertain the source of the supply of petrol, I should eventually make an interesting discovery.

By a ruse, therefore, I obtained knowledge of where the man X—— banked, and one day, at the head office of the bank in Lombard Street, after many official formalities, I gathered the curious fact that, though the motor-engineer had three years ago opened an account with fifty pounds in gold, yet, on the day of my inquiry, he had seven thousand pounds to his credit!

The local bank manager from Twiningham, who was in the room, informed me that before the war the man X—— frequently went to Paris, as he dealt in a certain make of French car, and that on his return he often made deposits in French bank-notes.

"Because they were not so easily traceable as English," I remarked, with a smile.

"I see," I went on, glancing at the open ledger, "there is a deposit of fifty pounds each month, on the eighteenth or nineteenth. Is that payment by cheque?"

"No; always in gold. He has paid in that sum quite regularly—every month for the past eighteen months. In fact, he seldom pays in any cheques—except small ones. All the large sums are in notes or in gold. Once or twice there have been cheques on the Italian Banca Commerciale."

It was in consequence of what I learnt at the bank that I decided to further prosecute my inquiries in Norfolk, and with that object Major Ian Macdonald—whom I had assisted in solving other mysteries—Day, our round-faced, rather empty-headed-looking chauffeur, Clotilde, and myself held a council of war in my high-up little sitting-room overlooking Southampton Row.

After a long discussion, we unanimously agreed upon a plan of campaign.

The first step was taken by Day, who, travelling next morning to Twiningham, took lodgings as a chauffeur out of a job, and applied for one at Charles X——'s Garage.

Our friend X—— had no vacancy. This seemed strange in the light of our knowledge of Cane's death. Again, from what we could gather, he had never made any inquiry regarding the missing young man.

Day's rather idiotic stare, the abnormal size of his head, and the clumsiness of his body, however, seemed to appeal to Mr. X——, who, after reflecting, offered him a job to do odd driving when required. He had, among other cars, two taxis, and in the middle of that week Day, the War Office staff driver, found himself in shabby overcoat and faded cap plying for hire at Twiningham station.

Though he looked a fool, Day was certainly the reverse. He was a very clever and astute watcher, who never knew weariness or became impatient.

For a week I heard nothing more of him until one afternoon I received an unsigned telegram, handed in at Twiningham, saying:

> Meet me outside the King's Head to-night at ten.

At the hour appointed I was lounging near the hotel when Day passed me and, in a whisper, urged me to follow him.

When we were safely up a dark by-street, he halted and said:

"There's something doing to-night, I believe, Mr. Nettlefield. I overheard something curious to-day. If you're game, sir,

we'll watch. I know a good place, and I've already seen to it that we can get in."

Soon afterwards he walked away, and I followed him at a respectable distance through the main streets of the town till we were about to pass X——'s Garage, which was situated a little distance beyond the station, when he suddenly turned up a narrow alley, and presently stepped into a dark doorway. On following I found myself in a small courtyard behind a big, long, brick-built kind of warehouse in which was a small door, through which he disappeared. As I went in quickly behind him, he closed the door noiselessly, and then, producing a small flash-lamp, he shone it about, showing that we were behind a stack of empty petrol tins at the end of a shed which I found to be far larger than I had believed from its exterior appearance.

"The other door of this place is our yard," he whispered. "We must wait here, and watch."

Then, as we seated ourselves on some tins in a narrow space which he had purposely cleared, he told me of several all-night vigils which he had kept in that big petrol store, which was now empty save for a dozen or so full tins and the stack of empties, and how that morning he had overheard his master speaking on the telephone—a conversation which had aroused his suspicion. Charles X—— had asked someone when "the Greens — Mr. and Mrs. Green — were coming." And the reply had been that they were due that evening. Did "the Greens" mean petrol?

For several hours we waited in the darkness, not daring to smoke, and only conversing in whispers until, just before ten o'clock, for I had only five minutes before glanced at the luminous watch on my wrist, we heard the sound of a heavy motor-lorry approaching. Presently the big gates of the garage were thrown open and it drew into the yard, the engine being at once shut off.

Five minutes later the door of the shed was unlocked, and Charles X——, wearing rubber tennis-shoes, together with the two men from the lorry, who also trod noiselessly in rubber-soled shoes, entered and switched on the electric-light.

Then, as we watched, they started to come and go in procession as they quickly unloaded the lorry, each carrying four tins of petrol at a time, one under each arm and one in each hand, with a dexterity which showed them to be adept at handling them.

They stacked them at the end of the shed farthest from where we were lurking, yet speaking no word the while.

Without much delay the lorry drew out of the yard empty and disappeared, the noise of the engine quickly dying away. Yet, hardly had it done so before a second lorry-load of full tins arrived, all of which were added to the stack, while this was succeeded by a third lorry, and that by a fourth, until we calculated that nearly two thousand gallons had been stored.

During the whole proceeding we had only caught one word. One of the men who had come with the last load had, in response to some whispered remark from the man X——, replied in the affirmative. The word he used was "*Ja!*"

Having heard the warehouse securely padlocked by X—— himself, and having listened to the retreating lorry, we flashed our light around and gazed upon the enemy's illicit store.

To what destination was it consigned?

That was the point in which we were most concerned. The fact was now proved—which was at first disbelieved in the Department—that Charles X—— dealt in enemy petrol. It would now be necessary to watch and combat the sly and wonderfully clever efforts of Germany's secret agents—the vanguard of the Kaiser's army in our midst.

That the enemy had been long preparing to invade us was well known alike to the authorities and the public, and we at Whitehall knew well that it would be highly necessary for an invading army to have accumulated stores of petrol ready to their hand when, as they intended, they made a dash upon our shores.

At noon I was seated in the War Office with Major Macdonald, and at four o'clock that afternoon he, with Captain Greening, of the Department, Clotilde, and myself left for Twiningham in the big grey car which was usually driven by Day, and in which we had travelled so many adventurous journeys.

We had an enjoyable run, for the weather that May afternoon was perfect; but in the evening, as we were passing slowly through the narrow, old-world street of Wymondham, a man rushed out into the road waving his arms.

To our great surprise, it was Day!

"Glad I've stopped you, sir," he cried breathlessly to the Major. "Mr. X—— doesn't like me, and I've got the sack," he added bluntly.

With one voice we inquired the reason.

As we watched, they started to come and go in procession . . each carrying four tins of petrol at a time, one under each arm and one in each hand, with a dexterity which showed them to be adept at handling them.

"Well, Mr. Nettlefield," he said, addressing me, "this afternoon a motor-lorry came into the yard while I was there and delivered about twenty milk-cans, like those the farmers send up to London. Mr. X—— was out, and when he came back and found them dumped into the yard, his face first went red with anger, and then the colour of paper. He sent me out at once with the taxi to the station. But instead of going I made a pretence that I had engine-trouble. He wanted to get rid of me. But I wouldn't go. So he flew into a temper, told me I was incompetent, gave me a week's money, and threw me out."

At this we all laughed.

"Milk-cans!" I said. "Then the petrol is to be put into them, so that it can be again removed to its real destination without suspicion if anybody met it on the road."

We took Day into the car, and moved on for a mile or so, outside the town, in the direction of Twiningham. There we pulled up and held a consultation.

The result of this was that we drove Day back to within half-a-mile of Twiningham, and then went on to the King's Head. The Major and the Captain entered, while Clotilde and I drove on to X——'s Garage to fill up with petrol. What was more natural, as I had already made Mr. X——'s acquaintance?

My object was to see whether there was still any sign of the milk-cans.

But, though I chatted with X—— while the petrol was poured into my tank, I saw nothing of the cans. Across the yard was the big, long shed, almost like a barn, with its door securely padlocked. Little did the man dream that I knew what was behind that door!

Back at the hotel, we ate our dinner hurriedly, while Day, having reported himself, was sent to keep a watchful eye upon the garage.

It was Clotilde's opinion that the petrol was being taken down to the sea—an opinion which we all shared. But to what point on the Norfolk coast?

In our private room upstairs the Major produced his maps, from which we saw that from Salthouse, practically right along past Blakeney, Cley-next-the-Sea, and Stiffkey to Wells, stretched wide, uninhabited salt-marshes between the low-lying land and the sea.

Weybourne Hoop, a trifle to the south of Salthouse, was one of the most vulnerable points on the East Coast, and most favourable for the landing of a foreign army, as so deep was the sea that large ships could come in almost up to the beach. Hence we decided that the petrol must be stored somewhere in that vicinity.

The county police could probably have told us of suspected persons in that area, but, as it is one of the rules of the secret service to have nothing whatever to do with the police, we refrained, of course, from approaching them.

After dinner Day produced two motor-cycles from the garage of the hotel, one for our chauffeur and one for Captain Greening.

We had, after consulting our maps, come to the conclusion that the petrol, if taken to the sea, was taken over one or two of the several roads running north out of Twiningham—either on what I will call the Y or the Z road.

Therefore we had decided to place patrols upon them to watch for any suspicious vehicle leaving the city.

While the pair went forth on their motor cycles, I went with Day to our little lane behind the garage, and, opening the back-door with the false key he had managed to get out, we were soon inside and in our snug hiding-place.

In a single flash of our little lamp we saw that the milk-cans had been placed within, and the place reeked of spilt petrol.

We could hear no sound, therefore I crept forward in the dark until I stood before the cans, and, tapping one, found it to be full. Many of the tins we had seen brought in there were now empty—emptied into the cans ready for transport.

Yet, though we waited there on the alert all night, while the Major and Clotilde were in the car somewhere on the Z road, nobody came near. Nothing stirred.

Therefore we relaxed our vigil at six o'clock, and together walked along the high road to meet the car, as it was injudicious to arrive at the hotel before eight or so, or we might arouse suspicion among the staff.

After resting all the morning we lunched, and then, while Day remained behind to watch, we went out away through the quiet little town of Z and down to the sea, reconnoitring all the low-lying land and marshes between Weybourne and Wells.

Many of the isolated farms, disused windmills, and old barns we regarded with suspicion, and returned to Twiningham all feeling more than ever convinced that if Mr. X—— was engaged in petrol running for the enemy, then the destination of the

petrol was not German submarines, but that a secret depot was being made in preparation for the arrival of the Kaiser's invading army.

At six o'clock, in a shabby old coat and cap which I had brought in the car, I relieved Day from watching in the vicinity of the garage, and thenceforth, till eleven, remained ever vigilant. I had seen X—— go out with a girl in one of the cars about seven, but he did not return till long past ten, being then alone.

It was while I idled about, watching, racking my brain to devise some neat scheme to checkmate the Kaiser's dastardly agents, that a sudden suggestion crossed my mind. I was not long in putting it into practice, for by the first train in the morning I ran up to London and took a taxi to a house of a working jeweller I knew in Kingsland. I was very busy that morning, for I then went to the War Office, where the director of our department handed me, at my request, a written order which I took down to a certain address in South London, and when I again left Liverpool Street for Twiningham by the night mail I had, as luggage, a single green-painted petrol tin.

Arriving at the station in the grey of the morning I found Day awaiting me. His report was brief. Nothing had happened.

He looked with some curiosity at my petrol tin, whereupon I said:

"I want to get into the store again and leave this."

"Leave that!" he echoed. "What for, sir? They might count the tins and find one too many!"

"Oh, no, they won't," I laughed, "I shall take one away."

I saw he was puzzled, but secrecy being all important, I said nothing. We walked together back to the narrow, secluded lane from which only half-an-hour before he had emerged. He was as keen on spy-hunting as I was, and, the opportunity thus afforded him, he took advantage of it to do his best.

Noiselessly we slipped into the great building whence, through a skylight, the first grey of day was approaching, and advancing to the stack of full tins of petrol I drew out one from behind and substituted mine in its place, taking possession of the enemy's tin and carrying it out swiftly, while Day re-locked the door behind us.

Boldly we both crossed the town to the King's Head, where, in the old courtyard, I set down the tin and then we both went in and up to bed.

A whole week we spent in fruitless vigilance until the Major grew sarcastic at my expense, and the Captain, who openly declared that he was "fed up" with staying out alone on a country road each night, expressed the opinion that we were on a mare's nest.

Clotilde was confident, however. So was I. My well-beloved, who assisted me so nobly and would watch and wait at any hour or in any weather, had many times urged me to persevere.

Well, I did persevere, with the result I will here reveal to you, even at the expense of infringing the Defence of the Realm Act.

On the ninth afternoon that we were in Twiningham, Day, who with our new chauffeur and myself had watched the garage continuously, rang me up to say that a farmer's waggon had drawn into the yard, and that milk-cans were being loaded into it.

In an instant we were all agog. Clotilde had foreseen this circumstance, and had some days previously hired a cycle in readiness.

"I'll follow the waggon. They'll never suspect me—a woman alone. It can only go slowly with a heavy load, wherever it is going."

"But, dearest," I protested, "I don't like your going alone."

"Oh! I'm all right," she laughed. "They won't suspect me. If you followed them they might certainly have their suspicions aroused. Remember that the people who are running this crooked piece of business are a shrewd lot, and have eyes in the back of their heads."

Well, I allowed her to go. She mounted her cycle outside the hotel at about half-past three in the afternoon and, smiling merrily at us, disappeared down the busy street. Clotilde—my own dear Clotilde—was, indeed, a brave, fearless little woman.

Then I hurried along to pick up Day, leaving the Major and the Captain in readiness to rush out in the car should I ring them up. Between us we had arranged certain code-words so that the telephone operators might remain in ignorance of the exciting work in progress.

I found the faithful Day idly smoking a cigarette at the corner of the street, when I came up with him.

"A waggon has just gone off, sir, with Miss Atherton following," he said in a low voice. "We'll get into the store again. They may be moving the whole lot to-day! It's the

middle of the month, and after the removal he gets paid for it, doesn't he?"

A quarter of an hour later we were both comfortably ensconced among the stack of empty petrol tins, waiting and wondering. Was the removal really to take place?

For over an hour we waited, in silence and eagerness, because the door in front of us had not been relocked. There were still some more milk-cans in readiness for removal. But we knew that the first consignment was being watched by Clotilde.

Suddenly we heard the heavy vibration of another big motor-lorry coming into the yard, while soon afterwards the engine was stopped, whereupon X—— himself threw open the door, admitting the light. Through it we saw that the lorry was painted dark grey, and upon it in white was the broad arrow with the initials "W. D." on either side.

"You'll be able to take half that lot," we heard X—— say, pointing to the stack of full tins. "The other lorry following can take the remainder."

"All right, sir," was the reply in a voice which, to us, sounded suspiciously as though possessing an accent.

As soon as the words fell upon my ear I crept forward along the rear of the stack of full petrol tins until, by the mark I had scratched upon the paint, I recognised the can I had placed there.

With trembling fingers I gave the brass screw-cap just a half-turn, and then I hopped back to where Day was crouching.

"Why did you risk going over there?" he asked in apprehension. "They might have heard you!"

"Come on," I said. "Let's clear out of this. The lorry will be able to get along, so we must follow it in the car."

Half-an-hour later, as the grey lorry with the Government mark upon it, went along the Z road, we followed closely in the white dust it raised. Indeed, we followed it through Z, and down to a long marsh village. There, just outside the little rural post-office we came across Clotilde, acting as though fatigued after her cycle ride.

I gave her a sign and we went on, following the lorry away through another village, when suddenly we saw it turn through a gate on to a by-road, muddy and soft in wet weather, which led out to a big black barn standing half-a-mile away on the salt marshes, a lovely object upon the dreary landscape of that No Man's Land.

"I see!" cried Major MacDonald. "That's the place—that big black barn quite close to the sea. I dare say, if the truth were known, it's full of petrol."

"I hope it is," I laughed. "Let's get on, or we may be suspected. We'll return to Clotilde. She's waiting for us."

We sped away after watching the grey lorry pull up at the barn at the end of that sandy sea-road, and, taking a turn inland, subsequently found Clotilde, who was able to point out the farm at which the milk-cans had been delivered.

That was about half-past seven in the evening.

We ran along the coast-road through Sheringham to Cromer—Clotilde following us on her cycle to Sheringham, where she left it. At Cromer we dined and spent the evening, and just before half-past eleven went forth again.

At a point on the road which I indicated we pulled up.

I then glanced at my watch.

"Patience for another three minutes," I urged.

Those anxious minutes went by as hours, but at last they passed, when, of a sudden, away on the marsh at the barn where the enemy's petrol was stored, there came a terrific report, a blinding red flash, a huge roar and next moment the sky was red with the fierce flame of burning petrol, which rose high in the air, with suffocating clouds of black smoke driving into our faces.

The conflagration was terrible, and could be seen for miles, as the whole of the enemy's store—ignited by the time-machine I had introduced into the tin—petered out.

"The milk-cans have been unloaded at that farm just across yonder," Clotilde explained, indicating in the darkness a long, low-built place surrounded by fir trees revealed by the fierce glare.

But perhaps it is unnecessary to describe anything further, save to that, on the following day, Charles X—— was arrested, and subsequently sent to penal servitude for seven years as a traitor suborned by German gold. While his accomplice, a man of a certain farm—upon whose premises the milk-cans containing petrol were found—was also sent to Dartmoor for five years—a well-deserved punishment, with which most of my readers will agree.

(Another exciting spy story by Mr. le Queux next month.)

Love Letters of an Actress

by

Elsie Janis

These letters are not in the least statistical, but merely the legitimate offspring of imagination and observation. The first six characters were typically American, while these that follow them reflect the attitude of the modern Englishman to the stage. Personally, the only man that ever told me he could not live without me was divorced by the lady he married two months afterwards, on the ground of cruelty. However, this is my idea of how a popular actress should be loved.—ELSIE JANIS

I. THE CRITIC.

Cutting from London paper after Mary Marsden's debut.

Another American Invasion.

SELDOM have I seen such an ovation given an actress of any description as was accorded Miss Mary Marsden last night; and never have I seen anything more deserved. Miss Marsden is not only a genius, but she is a beauty, totally unaware of the fact, absolutely natural, and with it all, young and slim almost to the Flapper extent. Miss Marsden is the best thing America has sent us, and she must be regarded as a treasure, which she is. I hope she is as young as she seems, but not too young to appreciate these few words of praise from a hardened old theatre-goer.

THE BACHELOR.

Her Letter to the Bachelor.

DEAR BACHELOR,

Of all the charming things that the London papers have said of me, I must say I love your praise most of all. You sound so human and sincere; I should love to know you. Please do not attribute this to "Flapper" impulsiveness; I'm really not so young as I look, and won't you come to tea with me?—so that I may thank you personally.

Yours gratefully,

MARY MARSDEN.

The Bachelor's Response.

DEAR GENIUS,

For all my years, some discreet and some otherwise, I confess I am nervous. Forgive me if I am frank. But I am a preserver of ideals. I have never seen anyone more charming on the stage than you are, and I am afraid to see you off for fear of being disappointed. One thinks of angels, but one does not aspire to taking tea with them for fear they might take more than one muffin, which angels should not do. If you were any more charming off the stage than on I could not bear it, and if you were any less charming, another ideal would be shattered. So I must decline your sweet invitation. I am old and have very few ideals left, so please respect my grey beard and let me preserve what few I have.

In all admiration,

THE BACHELOR.

Her Second Letter.

ELUSIVE FRIEND (to be I hope),

Surely you know women, and you have played the trump card in the game of

life, really to gain the always welcome trick known as interest. I am consumed: at first I wrote from gratitude, now I write from conceit. You have touched a vital spot in my nature in suggesting that I am just an actress. Before all I am a woman, and a curious one. There is no other kind I'm told. But really I now not only ask but entreat you. Come out of your shell and give your ideals an airing. Let me see you as you are, and risk one more ideal for my sake.

Hopefully,

MARY MARSDEN.

P.S. I love grey beards.

The Bachelor Answers.

INSISTENT IMP,

You baffle me. For sixteen years I have been writing things, pleasant and unpleasant, about actresses, but I never before have known of one who was not content to read pretty things about herself without caring whether the writer had a grey beard or pink side-whiskers. You are unique, and I would love to gratify your whim, but alas! I am afraid of close inspection. I have no grey beard, but I do know women, and I know you would be disappointed. Miss Mary, I have a dark confession to make. When I started writing, more years ago than I care to count, the papers would not take me seriously, not only because I had no grey beard, but because I was hampered by something much longer—skirts.

I am a woman. I took the *nom de plume* of Bachelor, because alas! the world cares more for what men say than what women attempt to say. Now you know the worst. Aren't you ashamed?

THE BACHELOR-ESS.

P.S. I have, however, grey hair.

Mary writes again.

DEAR FRAUD,

I am ashamed—of the game I have played. I knew it all the time and I just wanted to see what you would do if faced by an insistent female. I am not in the least disappointed. I am pleased, for if you really meant the charming things you said of me they are all the more welcome, coming from a woman. For a man to say nice things of a woman is natural; for a woman to say them is extraordinary. Won't you come to tea? And we will smash ideals together.

Sincerely,

MARY MARSDEN.

Women have no illusions about each other. That's why they are rarely good friends.

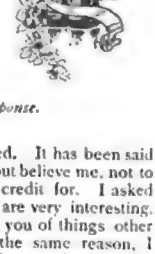
II.—THE MILLIONAIRE.

Note, with Flowers.

Athenæum Club.

DEAR MISS MARSDEN,

The other evening at dinner you very kindly told me I might call. I have thought long before inflicting myself upon you, as I suppose you are kind-hearted and were merely being kind to an old man, but if so, won't you please do it again? I am seeing your play to-night, and want to know if you won't come for a bite of supper with me? Bring anyone you like and as many. All I ask is the brightness of your smile.



Yours sincerely,

JOHN WAINWRIGHT.

Her Response.

DEAR SIR JOHN,

I shall be charmed. It has been said that I am kind-hearted, but believe me, not to the extent you give me credit for. I asked you to call because you are very interesting, and I enjoyed talking to you of things other than *my art*. So, for the same reason, I shall come to supper with you, alone, if you don't mind.

MARY MARSDEN.

His Letter.

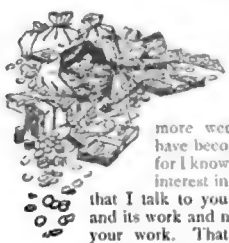
Two months later.

S. S. *Baltic.*

DEAR MARY,

I have waited until I got on the ship and safely away before writing the following, as I

did not want to see you smile at an old man's foolishness. In the first place, I want to thank you with all my fifty-eight-year-old heart for the happy hours I have spent in your company. They say we love really but once. I do not believe it. For I know that I loved my wife devotedly. And my great grief in life has been that when she was taken from me she left no children for me to love, for her sake, if not for their own. Now, I know I love you fondly and truly. The world would say, "Poor old fool!" but I say, "Lucky old dog!" to be able at fifty-eight to love as I do; so that I am only really happy when with you, not necessarily talking to you, but just in your presence. This is the real reason of my trip to America. I realised that in a few more weeks I should have become a burden; for I know that your only interest in me has been that I talk to you of the world and its work and not of you and your work. That is why you spent as much time with me, and I know it. It seems rather funny for an old fool to be taking a trip as a sort of a cure for an *affaire du cœur*, but I am the living proof that it can be done. Dear girl, let me hear from you, and if at any time you tire of your work and would like a home and everything that that much abused but utterly necessary thing, money, can buy, remember that I wait with open arms for you.



Your servant,

JOHN WAINWRIGHT.

Her Answer.

DEAR SIR JOHN,

I cannot tell you how honoured I am that you should think of me as you do, and if I have really given you any happiness it is nothing compared to that which you have given me. I miss you dreadfully and shall, as you say, let you hear from me often. I only wish that I were tired and could give up my work and accept all that you honour me by offering, but I love my work and could not give it up unless it was for something I loved a great deal more. That something I have not yet seen, and, so far, don't believe it exists. Write me often and tell me of your trip. I do hope you will like America and wish we might be seeing it together.

Always,

MARY.

Clipping from New York paper.

Three months later.

The will of the late Sir John Wainwright was probated to-day in London. He leaves practically everything to his younger brother, William Wainwright, with a few bequests to his friends and faithful servants. His will bequeaths £3,000 to Mary Marsden, the actress who is playing now in London, as a token of his love and esteem for one of God's own good women. The chauffeur who was driving the car which struck Sir John, causing his instant death, has been acquitted. The case came up a week ago in New York, and the witnesses swore that the man was not to blame. Sir John was making his first visit to America, and had expressed himself as being more than impressed. The world loses one of its great men by this accident.

And yet there are those poor souls that say money will buy anything.

III.—THE KNUT.

Note, with orchids received every night for a fortnight.

DEAR MISS MARSDEN,

I cannot resist any longer. I've been to see your topping play eleven times, and I think you are simply ripping. I hope my flowers have given you one per cent. of the pleasure that your acting has given me. I'm simply "dotty" to meet you, and I've tried every known way. I've asked every fellow I know if he knows you, and it seems that you are rather selfish in, as the Cockneys say, keeping yourself to yourself, for none of the fellows I know have the honour. What shall I do about it? You don't want death by suicide of a younger son on your head, do you? Don't think me too big a fool, and don't be selfish.

REGINALD RIVES.

Cambridge Club, Pall Mall.

Her Answer.

DEAR MR. RIVES,

I loved the flowers, and was much puzzled as to whom they were from. I'm glad you have been unselfish in letting me know. I've never looked upon my keeping myself to myself as being selfish, and really you have opened my eyes. I shall turn over a new leaf starting with you. I'm having a few friends to tea on Thursday; won't you come? Don't act as if you didn't know me, as I should not want anyone to know that by trying to be unselfish I am being so unconventional. That's our secret.

MARY MARSDEN.

His Note after meeting Mary.

DEAR MISS MARSDEN,

I am more "dotty" than ever, and have a heart filled with sympathy for the poor chap who said "So near and yet so far." It took me two hours to prepare myself for the meeting, and then amidst the crowd of admirers at tea the only thing you said to me was, "Two lumps or three?" I answered "Four," hoping you would be surprised, but, alas! you dealt them out without a tremor. You are as cruel as you are attractive. Believe me, I did not only aspire to a close view of you, I want to know you. You've started so well on the unselfish path, won't you go a little farther?

REGINALD RIVES.

Her Answer.

DEAR MR. RIVES,

For one who is so intrepid you are very shy. Surely when one asks people to tea, one must give it to them, no matter how much sugar they take; but when one has finished pouring one looks about for the more interesting tea-drinker, as I looked for you, but you had flown. I want to know you also, so will you dine with me on Sunday next at eight? You may have as much sugar as you like. Don't you think I am rather excellent in unselfishness?

MARY MARSDEN.

His Note two weeks later.

DEAREST MARY,

Will you be a dear and come to lunch on Sunday to meet my people? They are rather stodgy, but they mean well, and it would help me a lot. To tell the truth, the mater is up in the air over my being in love with an actress. Isn't that comic? And I'm twenty-one. But just to settle it all I want her to meet you, and then, of course, she will surrender. Please be a sport and come.

Your

REGGIE.

Letter from Reggie's Mother, Lady Stafford, to Mary.

MY DEAR MISS MARSDEN,

I hope you will forgive me for writing what I should like to say to you personally. I feel it advisable to write as I am more sure of myself on paper. My husband and I have just learnt what you have no doubt known for some time, that our son Reggie has but one idea left in his head, and that is you. We have tried to reason with him, but as we all know, where love exists, or where one thinks it exists, reason is not in the question. Reggie is to you, I'm sure, one of hundreds; to us he is the only boy. I am asking you to give him up. He is so young he will live through it as hundreds of boys have, and you will, I'm sure, see that you have done the right thing. Please do not mention this letter to the boy, but if you will do this you will make one mother very happy. Lord Simpson joins me in thanking you for sympathy of which we are sure.

Yours sincerely,

ALICE SIMPSON.

Mary's Answer.

DEAR LADY SIMPSON,

You are doing the worst thing in the world to attain your own ends, but I will help you. I should have kept Reggie near

me, helping him to become that which it is difficult to become with adoring parents on the scene—a real man. Your son is as you suggest, one of many friends, but that is all. Personally, I am far too busy in my own way to spend my time trying to fascinate younger sons of the peerage. I will let him down as you suggest, but if he has the making of the man I think he has in him, it will be useless.

Yours sincerely,

MARY MARSDEN.

Reggie's Letter After Being "Let Down."

DARLING,

It is no use your telling me you really don't like me, because you're not the kind to have me around if you did not. It's all bally rot, and I know my family are at the bottom of it. Well, I'll show them. I shall not stay away from you, and if you refuse to see me because they were rotters enough to suggest it, I will see you anyway without your precious permission. Darling, I adore you, and you've done more in four weeks to make me a regular chap than they've done in twenty-one years. I shall see you soon. Mark my words.

REGGIE.

Cutting from London Paper Six Months Later.

"The new play at the St. James's last night had the distinction of having an 'honourable' in the cast. The part of the young man who forgot everything was played by none other than the Hon. Reginald Rives, and played excellently. This part is only Mr. Rives' second, but I predict it will be one of his smallest, as he has personality and a gift for comedy. Miss Mary Marsden as the heroine was as only she can be, charming. Mary Marsden, etc."

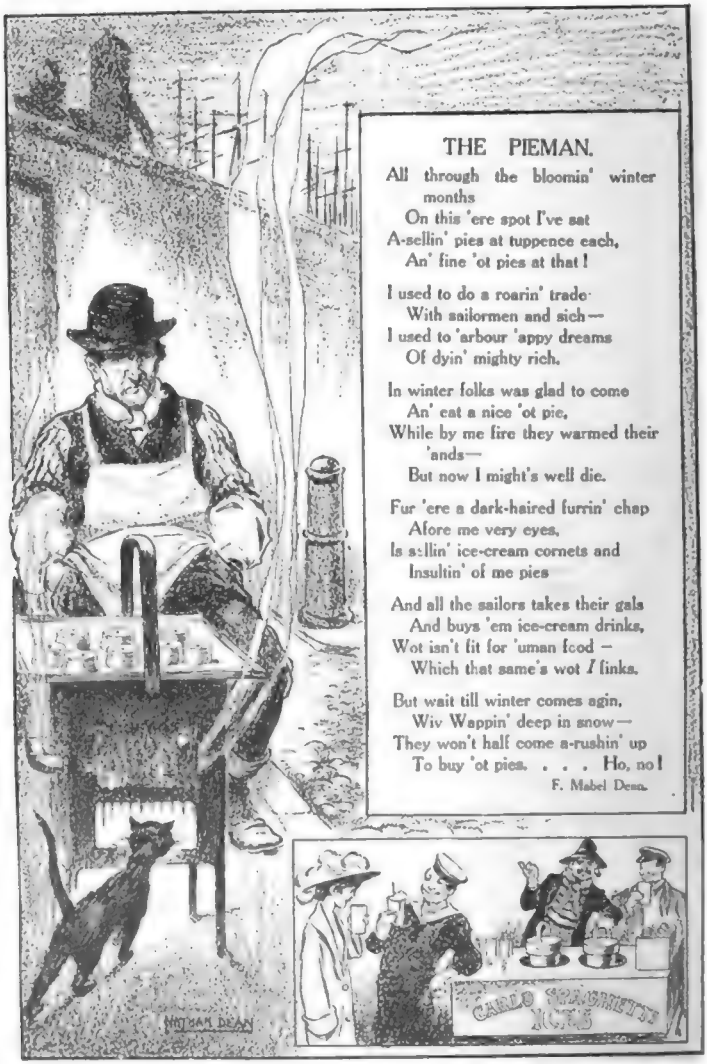
THE LEGACY OF SUMMER.

When summer turns her face away,
And August's golden sky is grey;
When autumn comes with driving rain—
I press my nose against the pane,
And curse the failing, sombre day!

The leaves are moulding in decay;
The birds have put their songs away;
My heart is filled with drear dismay . . .

For gone is summer's roundelay,
Her golden hours of mirth and play . . .
Yet part of summer doth remain—
The flapper's sunny, laughing reign;
To her no winter chills impart—
She holds the summer in her heart.

Gwen Nisbet.


THE PIEMAN.
All through the bloomin' winter months
On this 'ere spot I've sat
A-sellin' pies at tuppence each,
An' fine 'ot pies at that!
I used to do a roarin' trade
With sailormen and sich—
I used to 'arbour 'appy dreams
Of dyin' mighty rich.
In winter folks was glad to come
An' eat a nice 'ot pie,
While by me fire they warmed their 'ands—
But now I might's well die.
Fur 'ere a dark-haired furrin' chap
Afore me very eyes,
Is sellin' ice-cream cornets and
Insultin' of me pies
And all the sailors takes their gals
And buys 'em ice-cream drinks,
Wot isn't fit for 'uman food —
Which that same's wot I finks.
But wait till winter comes agin,
Wiv Wappin' deep in snow—
They won't half come a-rushin' up
To buy 'ot pies. . . . Ho, no!
F. Mabel Dean.
MABEL DEAN

The MAN at "MUNKI PUZ"

By A. M. Burrage.

"The rose is fairest when 'tis budding new,
And hope is brightest when it dawns from fears.
The rose is sweetest washed with morning dew,
And love is loveliest when embalmed in tears."

It happened on a Thursday near that part of the Thames where every wealthy City man owns a houseboat, and where the merely well-to-do rent bungalows. Joan Hilberd's father owned a houseboat, not to mention two motor-launches and a small fleet of punts, skiffs, dinghies, and canoes.

Joan was fifteen, and just beginning to realise that she was pretty, and that her father was a man of some importance. She was a slim child with a mop of black hair, dark eyes, and a warm-tinted skin that kept its summer coat of bronze all through the winter. On weekdays, when her father was in the City adding more gold to his already considerable collection, she was allowed to run wild, and that explains how she came to make her way up the Snake in a Canadian canoe.

The Snake is a backwater, so named on account of its sharp curves. There is a bend in the river on the left hand going up stream, where the way is barred by a weir. The backwater, however, faces you, and is worth exploring if you can propel your craft over the shallows and against the heavy current. It is impossible, however, to reach the main river again without turning back, for at the top of the Snake is a waterfall without lock or rollers.

The island thus formed is divided into plots of land, on each of which stands a pretty and curiously-named bungalow. These bungalows face the river and turn their backs upon the Snake.

Joan could manage any kind of river craft, and she knew the Snake well. To get up it in a punt was very like hard work, even with two men poling, but in a Canadian canoe she fancied it would be child's play. There had been some rain, however, and the stream ran like a mill-race in places. When she upset the canoe it happened that she was in one of the deepest and most dangerous parts.

Most of the bungalows were unoccupied from Monday till Saturday, but, fortunately for her, she fell in immediately opposite "Munki Puz," where a man sat writing in the pretty little sitting-room. He saw what had happened and vaulted the verandah railings.

"All right!" he cried, and scrambled down the bank through the high nettles.

Joan never knew how she came to upset it. One moment she was straining at the paddle, and the next she was in the water. She could not swim, and afterwards had the hardihood to affirm that she was not frightened, but when she reached the surface after much floundering she sent up an S.O.S. call that bade fair to make the skies re-echo.

Without pausing on the brink, the man leant forward and tumbled in head first. His hands were out of the water almost before his heels were in, and by using a powerful trudgeon stroke he reached Joan almost before she realised that help was at hand. Not too gently he seized her from behind by her thick black hair.

However frightened or excited Joan may have been at first, she became quite calm at the prospect of being pulled out.

"All right!" he cried, and scrambled down the bank through the high nettles—

"Oo!" she exclaimed. "That hurts!"

"So does being drowned," said a voice in her ear.

Suddenly arms encircled her, and she felt herself being carried, and knew that her rescuer was wading. He took her to a part of the bank where there were less nettles and thistles than elsewhere, and gave her a little push.

"Up you get," he said, "and I'll fetch the canoe."

He swam back for it while Joan climbed the bank. While he towed it in she sat shaking the water out of her hair and watching him. He swam well, was quite good-looking, and appeared strong and sunburnt. Joan silently approved him. Such a man had she decided to marry when she grew old enough.

"There you are," he said presently, climbing the bank and dragging the canoe up after him. "I say, you know, your people ought to be shot."

"Why?"

"Letting you rot about in a canoe alone on the river when you can't swim."

"They didn't know," Joan replied humbly.

"Then you ought to be—drowned."

Joan might have answered with perfect truth that she nearly had been, but she had yet to say something nice to her rescuer.

"It was awfully decent of you," she murmured, "and frightfully brave."

"Frightfully!" he agreed cordially. "Considering I'm such a rotten swimmer."

"No, I didn't mean that. I can't very well say 'Thanks awfully,' as if you'd asked me to have some more cake. What *am* I to say?"

The dripping rescuer seemed to consider the question for a moment with deep gravity.

"I think you'd better say 'Thanks very much, Mr. Storr, for pulling me out. I'm sorry I was such a beastly little nuisance.'"

Joan repeated this humbly and obediently, and then looked up in time to see that Storr's eyes were twinkling. Then she smiled broadly.

"But is that enough?" she asked ingenuously. "Oughtn't I to kiss you or something?"

If Storr were surprised he did not show it. He was fond of children, and looking down on her he saw a very pretty little girl whose dark eyes were alight with gratitude.

"Yes," he said thoughtfully, "perhaps you ought," and bent his cheek to her.

"Now," he added, "where do you come from, you fearless she-navigator?"

"Houseboat just t'other side of Topton Lock."

"Jove!" he exclaimed. "That's three miles away, and my punt wants baling out. You'll get your death of cold while I'm taking you back."

"I s'pose I deserve it," Joan said meekly.

"Yes, but all the same, we may as well

do our best to save your young life, having taken a certain amount of fag over it already. You'll have to get dry first somehow."

He looked away from her as if in thought, and the moment he ceased speaking to her in his rallying way, a shadow crossed his face and an unmistakable look came into his eyes. Joan was old enough to know that look and realise what it meant. The man was in trouble—deep, terrible trouble. The knowledge came to her with a sharp stab of pain. He was much too nice a man to have that look on his face.

Presently he spoke again, and the expression passed.

"I know!" he cried. "We'll commit burglary next door. The Westons are away during the week. You'll find some togs in there that'll fit you down to the ground. Young Marjory's a bit older than you, but she's no bigger."

Joan's eyes opened wider.

"Won't she mind?"

"Not a bit! They're pals of mine, and besides, there's a sort of freemasonry amongst us here on the island. I'll lend you a bag to take your wet clothes away in, and you can send Marjory's back as soon as you get home. Come on!"

Together they scrambled along the bank until they reached the garden of the next bungalow, which had been named "Hitchi Koo," during the ragtime craze. Storr opened a window, climbed in, and dragged her in afterwards. He pointed to a door.

"That's a bedroom," he said. "Inside there you'll find a chest of drawers. In the chest of drawers you'll find everything you want. Don't make more mess than will take a month to clear up. I'm going to change, too, and make some tea. When you're ready you'll find me round at 'Munki Puz'."

Twenty minutes later when Storr, dry and clothed in immaculate flannels, was in the kitchen, clattering plates and tea-cups, a radiant vision appeared at the window. He stared at it, surprised almost into dropping the crockeryware in his hands. He had fished a child out of the water and behold! a young woman was standing outside. Joan in the clothes of a grown-up girl looked four years older, and now wore an air of dignity to match.

"May I come in?" she asked.

"Of course," he answered. And then: "Why, great Scott, child, you've put your hair up."

She disappeared for a moment, and then entered by the door.

"I thought I might as well," she remarked, "as I'm wearing a long skirt. Of course, it's all wet, so I can't do much with it. How do I look?"

"Inexpressibly charming. You also look as if you can cut bread-and-butter."

"So I can," she admitted, and set to work skilfully. Presently she looked up.

"I'm afraid I'm an awful nuisance," she observed.

He regarded her thoughtfully.

"I don't know," he murmured. "That's what I haven't quite decided yet. If you hadn't tumbled in I shouldn't be here now."

"Why, were you going out?"

He nodded.

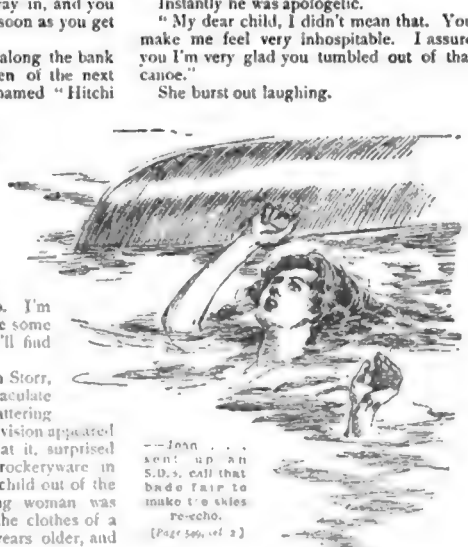
"Yes, that's a good phrase. I was going out."

"I'm very sorry," she said, feeling snubbed. "Don't get me any tea. I can go now."

Instantly he was apologetic.

"My dear child, I didn't mean that. You make me feel very inhospitable. I assure you I'm very glad you tumbled out of that canoe."

She burst out laughing.



—Joan . . . sent up an S.O.S., call that bade fair to make the skies re-echo.

(Page 549, col 2)

"That sounds funny!"

He threatened her playfully with the bread-knife.

"Look here, youngster, you mustn't twist my words about. Hullo, kettle's boiling. Run and put some of these things into the dining-room. I'll make the tea and follow you up."

She did as he directed, and when he entered the dining-room with the tray, she stood facing him across the room, and he found himself looking down the barrel of a revolver. He stood still immediately.

"Put that down, please," he said. "It's loaded!"

"Loaded!" She lowered her arm at once, and then turned and put the revolver back on the mantelpiece where she had found it.

"What do you want with a loaded pistol here?" she asked.

The direct question took him aback. A flush crept up over his cheeks. He stood staring at her, unable to answer for the moment.

"Burglars," he answered presently, and then set down the tray.

A flash of intuition entered the child's mind, and words were tumbling from her lips almost before she realised that she was speaking. Now she knew the meaning of the look that she had seen on his face outside by the backwater.

"You didn't get it for burglars at all," she cried. "You were going to kill yourself!"

He looked at her startled, horrified.

"I wasn't," he cried. "Don't be such a silly kid!"

"Yes, you were! And—and it's very wicked of you! And cowardly! And I thought you were such a brave man."

"I tell you," he said in a louder voice, "that I wasn't going to do anything of the sort! I keep that revolver here in case of burglars. Don't be a silly kid. Come and sit down."

She turned obediently, and in order to reach her end of the table passed a little bureau, the flap of which lay open. On it was a letter, half finished, which he had been engaged in writing when her cry came from the water. It was addressed to the coroner, and began: "When this reaches you I shall have died by my own hand." Joan could not help seeing it, and uttered a little cry.

"There!" she exclaimed pointing. "I knew! Didn't I say so?"

Storr glared at her, not quite knowing if he were angry or only abashed. But if he felt anger it was all gone in a moment. Joan's hands went up to her eyes, and instantly deep sobs began to shake her. He leant heavily and miserably on the table and watched her.

"Don't!" he said

"I—I c-c-can't help it. It's wicked of you, and cowardly. And you're so—so nice."

"Don't!" Storr repeated. "Don't cry. Anyway, I'm not worth it. Come and sit down and have your tea."

"Don't want any t-tea," Joan sobbed. "Th-thank you," she added after a moment.

Storr muttered strange words under his breath. Joan's tears were far from subsiding, and her shoulders shook more violently than ever. He crossed the room, and, standing beside her, laid a hand on her shoulder.

"It's all right," he said gently. "I'm not going to now. I swear I won't. I've altered my mind."

She looked up at him then, and fumbled with one hand for a handkerchief.

"Promise!"

"Yes, promise. Look."

He picked up the revolver, carried it on to the verandah, and hurled it out. It dropped into the backwater with a loud splash. Then he tore up the unfinished letter and flung the pieces into the grate.

"Do you believe in me now?" he asked.

"Y-yes."

"Then come and sit down. Will you pour out?"

She nodded and went to the head of the table, still sniffing. Storr watched her with half a smile on his lips. The humour of the situation had just come home to him. Such little things sometimes stand between a man and eternity.

Joan gave him milk and sugar without asking if he took either, and her eyes were still wet as she passed him his cup.

"Why were you going to do it?" she asked, looking up.

"My dear child," he said gently, "you wouldn't understand if I told you."

"Call me Joan," she begged. "And I dare say I *should* understand. I'm not such a kid as all that, you know."

"You look quite middle-aged in that get-up, Joan."

She took a final dab at her eyes with her pocket-handkerchief.

"Now you're laughing at me," she expostulated.

"I'm sorry. I haven't done much laughing

lately. Have some bread-and-butter? Oh! I haven't thanked you yet."

"What for?"

"Saving my life. You see, Joan, I'm no good in the world, and never have been. But I kept my honour until just lately. That's gone now, so I thought the best thing I could do was to clear out. Now I've done a bit of good. I pulled you out of the water. By my way of looking at it, I've bought myself the right to live."

"Of course you have," she said promptly, but with an air of not having followed his reasoning. There was silence for a moment, and then she said in a low voice, rather shyly:

"Won't you tell me why it was?"

"You don't understand business," he said, with a faint smile.

"Oh, don't I! Nobody who lived in our house could help it. I know what companies are, and what per cent. is, and all the rest of it."

"Well, you can't know much less about these things than I do. And I used to think I was quite a financier. When I was twenty-one everybody was buying rubber. If you bought the right kind, you made a fortune. If you didn't, you got badly pecked. I happened to buy the right kind."

Joan nodded.

"So did father, but then *he* would."

"Well, it was more by luck than judgment in my case. I made a big fortune. I've been losing it ever since by trying to make more. Not long ago I tried to get it all back by buying some new shares in a gold mine. They went down instead of up. Something called a 'call' will be made in a few days, which means I've got to pay some more money for them—and I haven't got it. It was dishonest of me to touch the things when I hadn't enough money. Now do you understand?"

He picked up the revolver, carried it on to the verandah, and hurled it out.

She nodded again.

"I think I do. Is that why you were going to——"

"Yes. You see, I shall have to be a bankrupt, and people will say nasty things about me. They will be true things, too.

Until a short time ago, I—well, I wasn't exactly proud of being honest, but I couldn't imagine being anything else. And when I found out I wasn't, I didn't feel like facing the future. You were quite right when you called me a coward."

Joan looked at him long and fixedly.

"You're not dishonest," she said. "Being bankrupt may happen to anybody, father says, and *he* ought to know. He's been bankrupt I don't know how many times, and he never minded a bit. When we came down to breakfast we used to say, 'Are you bankrupt to-day, father darling?' And sometimes he'd smile and say, 'No, dear; I got my discharge yesterday,' and then he'd give us a sovereign each to go and spend."

Storr looked down, rather abashed.

"Yes," he said, "that's all very well, but I'm not—not clever like your father."

"Oh, he's not clever; he's only father. I say, Mr.—Mr.——"

"Call me Jack."

"Well, Jack, you're not in love, are you?"

"Good Lord, no!"

She nodded her head wisely.

"I knew you weren't, or you wouldn't have thought of—of doing what you promised me you won't do."

Storr smiled on her indulgently.

"Very likely."

"Well, why don't you fall in love?"

His shoulders gave a little upward jerk.

"One can't accomplish these things at will, Miss Sentimental."

"No, I suppose not." She lowered her eyes for a moment. "Of course," she added thoughtfully, "I'm much too young."

Storr maintained his gravity with an effort. He said nothing, for it was scarcely his place to agree or disagree.

"Of course, I know I'm nothing to look at now," she went on, "but in a year or two I'm going to be very nice looking. All my aunts say so, and they told mother. Mother let it out to me by accident. That's how I know."

"I am sure," he agreed, "that you are going to be a beauty, little Joan, and that all the world will be at your feet."

"Then, if you wouldn't mind waiting a year or two, you might fall in love with me, mightn't you? And I read somewhere that there's nothing like the love of a good woman for keeping a man straight."

"Then," he said, "you would give me the cold shoulder, and break my heart."

"No, I wouldn't," she cried earnestly. "I can see I should have to be very careful how I treated *you*. Besides, I should be in love with you, too! Oh, there you go, laughing again, and it isn't a bit nice of you."

"How do you know you'd be in love with me?" he asked

She turned scarlet, and made him sorry that he had put the question. She had already begun the game that was something more than a game to her. Looking at her, he realised that in a few years' time it would be no laughing matter to talk of love with her.

"Haven't you saved my life?" she cried in answer to his question.

"Well, you saved mine, too, so I suppose I'm bound to fall in love with you. I think you're a dear kid. The only thing is that I may be at the other end of the earth. I shall have to begin to earn money somehow, shan't I?"

"That's all right," said Joan joyously. "Father'll give you a job in his office, and heaps and heaps of money."

Storr laughed aloud.

"But he doesn't even know me, Joan."

"He soon will. He won't be able to do enough for you when I tell him how you saved my life. He simply adores me."

Storr offered her some cut cake, and took a slice for himself.

"I don't wonder at it," he said. "But, really, Joan, I couldn't trade on pulling you out of the water, could I? No, I shall have to go out to the Colonies, and before I do anything else I shall have to earn enough money to pay the man in whose debt I stand Then, when I've done that, I shall be able to think of falling in love and making money on my own account."

Joan smiled radiantly.

"Who's the man you owe all this money to?" she asked. "Somebody in the City? Father knows everybody in the City, and they nearly all come to dinner with us at different times."

"I don't suppose you know him," Storr answered. "His name's Michael J. Hilberd."

The name had a magical effect upon Joan. First she choked, then she coughed, then she rose up shrieking with laughter.

She raced round the table to where Storr was sitting, and, still laughing, hugged him.

"Oh, you silly! she cried. "You silly! He won't be hard on you. *He's only father!*"

ANOTHER STORY OF TUG BLACKSTOCK AND JIM.

The Trail of the Bear

By Charles G. D. Roberts.

Tug Blackstock and Jim.

Tug Blackstock was the Deputy-Sheriff of Nipsiwaska County, and assisted by his clever police dog, Jim, gave short shrift to wrong-doers in the backwoods. The following story describes how he caught a cunning thief with the aid of Jim's cleverness.

I.

The Deputy-Sheriff of Nipsiwaska County had spent half-an-hour at the telephone. In the backwoods the telephone wires go everywhere. In that half-hour every settlement, every river-crossing, every lumber-camp, and most of the wide-scattered pioneer cabins had been warned of the flight of the thief, Dan Black, nicknamed Black Dan, and how, in the effort to secure his escape, he had shot and wounded the Deputy-Sheriff's big black dog whose cleverness on the trail he had such cause to dread. As Tug Blackstock, the Deputy-Sheriff, came out of the booth he asked after Jim.

"Oh, Black Dan's bullet broke no bones that time," replied the village doctor, who had tended the dog's wound as carefully as if his patient had been the Deputy himself. "It's a biggish hole, but Jim'll be all right in a few days, never fear."

Tug Blackstock looked relieved.

"Ye don't seem to be worryin' much about Black Dan's gittin' away, Tug," grumbled Long Jackson, who was not unnaturally sore over the loss of his money.

"No, I ain't worryin' much," agreed the Deputy, with a confident grin, "now I know Jim ain't goin' to lose a leg. As for Black Dan's gittin' away, well, I've got me own notions about that. I've 'phoned all over the three counties, and given warnin' to every place he kin stop for a bite or a bed. He can't cross the river to get over the Border, for I've sent word to hev every bridge an' ferry watched. Black Dan's

cunnin' enough to know I'd do jest that, first thing, so he won't waste his time tryin' the river. He'll strike right back into the big timber, countin' on the start he's got of us, now he's put Jim out of the game. But I guess I kin trail him myself—now I know what I'm trailin' — pretty nigh as well as Jim could. I've took note of his tracks, and there ain't another pair o' boots in Brine's Rip Mills like them he's wearin'."

"And when air ye goin' to start?" demanded Long Jackson, still inclined to be resentful.

"Right now," replied Blackstock cheerfully, "soon as ye kin git guns and stuff some crackers an' cheese into yer pockets. I'll want *you* to come along, MacDonald, an' you, Long, an' Saunders, an' Big Andy, as my posse. Meet me in fifteen minutes at the store an' I'll hev Zeb Smith swear ye in for the job. If Black Dan wants to do any shootin', it's jest as well to hev everythin' regular."

There were not a few others among the mill-hands and the villagers who had lost by Black Dan's cunning pilferings, and who would gladly have joined in the hunt. In the backwoods not even a murderer—unless his victim has been a woman or a child—is hunted down with so much zest as a thief. But the Deputy did not like too much volunteer assistance, and was apt to suppress it with scant ceremony. So his choice of a posse was accepted without protest or comment, and the chosen four slipped off to get their guns.

As Tug Blackstock had foreseen, the trail of the fugitive was easily picked up. Confident in his powers as a runaway, Black Dan's sole object, at first, had been to gain as much lead as possible over the expected pursuit, and he had run straight ahead, leaving a trail which any one of Blackstock's posse—with the exception, perhaps, of Big Andy—could have followed with almost the speed and precision of the Deputy himself.

There had been no attempt at concealment. About five miles back, however, in the heavy woods beyond the head of the Lake, it appeared that the fugitive had dropped into a walk and begun to go more circumspectly. The trail now grew so obscure that the other woodsmen would have had difficulty in deciphering it at all, and they were amazed at the ease and confidence with which Blackstock followed it up, hardly diminishing his stride.

"Tug is sure some trailer," commented Jackson, his good humour now quite restored by the progress they were making.

"*Jim* couldn't 'a' done no better himself," declared Big Andy, the Oromocto man.

And just then Blackstock came abruptly to a halt, and held up his hand for his followers to stop.

"Steady, boys. Stop right where ye are, an' don't step out o' yer tracks," he commanded.

The four stood rigid, and began searching the ground all about them with keen, initiated eyes.

"Oh, I've got him, so fur, all right," continued Blackstock, pointing to a particularly clear and heavy impression of a boot-sole close behind his own feet. "But here it stops. It don't appear to go any further."

He knelt down to examine the footprint.

"P'raps he's doubled back on his tracks, to throw us off," suggested Saunders, who was himself an expert on the trails of all the wild creatures.

"No," replied Blackstock, "I've watched out sharp for that."

"P'raps he's give a big jump to one side or t'other, to break his trail," said MacDonald.

"No," said Blackstock with decision, "nor that neither, Mac. This here print is *even*. Ef he'd jumped to one side or the other, it would be dug in on that side, and ef he'd jumped forrard, it would be hard down at the toe. It fair beats me!"

Stepping carefully, foot by foot, he examined the ground minutely over a half circle of a dozen yards to his front. He sent out his followers—all but Big Andy, who, being no trailer, was bidden to stand fast—to either side and to the rear, crawling like ferrets and interrogating every grass tuft, in vain. The trail had simply stopped with that one footprint. It was as if Black Dan had dissolved into a miasma, and floated off.

At last Tug Blackstock called the party in, and around the solitary footprint they all sat down and smoked. One after another they made suggestions, but each suggestion had its futility revealed and sealed by a stony stare from Blackstock, and was no more befriended by its author.

At last Blackstock rose to his feet, and gave a hitch to his belt.

"I don't mind tellin' ye, boys," said he, "it beats me fair. But *one* thing's plain enough, Black Dan ain't *here*, an' he ain't likely to come here lookin' for us. Spread out now, an' we'll work on ahead, an' see

ef we can't pick up somethin'. You, Big Andy, you keep right along behind me. There's an explanation to *everything*—an' we'll find this out afore along, or my name's Dinnis."

Over the next three or four hundred yards, however, nothing of significance was discovered by any of the party. Then, breaking through a dense screen of branches, Blackstock came upon the face of a rocky knoll, so steep, at that point, that hands and feet together would be needed to climb it. Casting his eyes upwards, he saw what looked like the entrance to a little cave.

A whistle brought the rest of the party to his side. A cave always holds possibilities, if nothing else. Blackstock spread his men out again, at intervals of three or four paces, and all went cautiously up the steep, converging on the entrance. Blackstock, in the centre, shielding himself behind a knob of rock, peered in.

The place was empty. It was hardly a cave, indeed, being little more than a shallow recess beneath an overhanging ledge. But it was well sheltered by a great branch which stretched upwards across the opening. Blackstock sniffed critically.

"A bear's den," he announced, stepping in and scrutinising the floor.

The floor was naked rock, scantily littered with dead leaves and twigs. These, Blackstock concluded, had been recently disturbed, but he could find no clue to what had disturbed them. From the further side, however—to Blackstock's right—a palpable trail, worn clear of moss and herbage, led off by a narrow ledge across the face of the knoll. Half-a-dozen paces further on the rock ended in a stretch of stiff soil. Here the trail declared itself. It was unmistakably that of a bear, and unmistakably, also, a fresh trail.

Waving the rest to stop where they were, Blackstock followed the clear trail down from the knoll, and for a couple of hundred yards along the level, going very slowly, and searching it hawk-eyed for some sign other than that of bear. At length he returned, looking slightly crestfallen.

"Nawthin' at all but bear," he announced in an injured voice. "But that bear seems to have been in a bit of a hurry, as if he was gittin' out o' somebody's way—Black Dan's way, it's dollars to doughnuts. But where was Black Dan, that's what I want to know?"

"Ef *you* don't know, Tug," said MacDonald, "who *kin* know?"

"Jim!" said the Deputy, rubbing his lean chin and biting off a big "chaw" of "blackjack."

"Jim's sure some dawg," agreed MacDonald. "That was the only fool thing I ever know'd ye to do, Tug—sendin' Jim after Black Dan that way."

Blackstock swore, softly and intensely, though he was a man not given to that form of self-expression.

"Boys," said he, "I used to fancy myself quite a lot. But now I begin to think Nipsiwaska County'd better be gittin' a noo Deputy. I ain't no manner o' good."

The men looked at him in frank astonishment. He had never before been seen in this mood of self-depreciation.

"Aw, shucks," exclaimed Long Jackson presently, "there ain't a man from here to the St. Lawrence as kin *tech* ye, an' ye know it, Tug. Quit yer jollyin' now. I believe ye've got somethin' up yer sleeve, only ye won't say so."

At this expression of unbounded confidence Blackstock braced up visibly.

"Well, boys, there's one thing I *kin* do," said he. "I'm goin' back to git Jim, ef I hev to fetch him in a wheelbarrow. We'll find out what he thinks o' the situation. I'll take Saunders an' Big Andy with me. You, Long, an' Mac, you stop on here an' lay low an' see what turns up. But don't go mussin' up the trails."

II.

Jim proved to be so far recovered that he was able to hobble about a little on three legs, the fourth being skilfully bandaged so that he could not put his foot to the ground. It was obvious, however, that he could not make a journey through the woods and be any use whatever at the end of it. Blackstock, therefore, knocked together a handy litter for his benefit.

Some twenty paces from that solitary footprint which marked the end of Black Dan's trail, Jim was set free from his litter and his attention directed to a bruised tuft of moss.

"Seek him," said Blackstock.

The dog gave one sniff, and then with a growl of anger the hair lifted along his back, and he limped forward hurriedly.

"He's got it in for Black Dan *now*," remarked MacDonald. And the whole party followed with hopeful expectation, so great was their faith in Jim's sagacity.

The dog, in his haste, overshot the end of the trail. He stopped abruptly, whined,

sniffed about, and came back to the deep boot-print. All about it he circled, whimpering with impatience, but never going more than a dozen feet away from it. Then he returned, sniffed long and earnestly, and stood over it with drooping tail, evidently quite nonplussed.

"He don't appear to make no more of it than you did, Tug," said Long Jackson, much disappointed.

"Oh, give him time, Long," retorted Blackstock. Then——

"Seek him! Seek him, good boy," he repeated, waving Jim to the front.

Running with amazing briskness on his three sound legs, the dog began to quarter the undergrowth in ever-widening half-circles, while the men stood waiting and watching. At last, at a distance of several hundred yards, he gave a yelp and a growl, and sprang forward.

"Got it!" exclaimed Big Andy.

"Guess it's only the trail o' that there b'ar he's struck," suggested Jackson pessimistically.

"Jim, stop!" ordered Blackstock. And the dog stood rigid in his tracks while Blackstock hastened forward to see what he had found.

"Sure enough. It's only the bear," cried Blackstock, investigating the great footprint over which Jim was standing. "Come along back here, Jim, an' don't go foolin' away yer time over a bear, jest *now*."

The dog sniffed at the trail, gave another hostile growl, and reluctantly followed his master back. Blackstock made him smell the boot-print again. Then he said with emphasis, "*Black Dan*, Jim, it's *Black Dan* we're wantin'. Seek him, boy. *Fetch him*."

Jim started off on the same manœuvres as before, and at the same point as before he again gave a growl and a yelp and bounded forward.

"*Jim*," shouted the Deputy angrily, "Come back here."

The dog came limping back, looking puzzled.

"What do you mean by that foolin'?" went on his master severely. "What's bears to you? Smell that!" and he pointed again to the boot-print. "It's *Black Dan* you're after."

Jim hung upon his words, but looked hopelessly at sea as to his meaning. He turned and gazed wistfully in the direction of the bear's trail. He seemed on the point of starting out for it again, but the tone of Blackstock's rebuke withheld him. Finally, he sat down upon his dejected tail and stared upwards into a great tree, one of whose lower branches stretched directly over his head.

Blackstock followed his gaze. The tree was an ancient rock maple, its branches large but comparatively few in number. Blackstock could see clear to its top. It was obvious that the tree could afford no hiding-place to anything larger than a wild-cat. Nevertheless, as Blackstock studied it, a gleam of sudden insight passed over his face.

"Jim 'pears to think Black Dan's gone to Heaven," remarked Saunders drily.

"Ye can't always tell *what* Jim's thinkin'," retorted Blackstock. "But I'll bet it's a clever idea he's got in his black head, whatever it is."

He scanned the tree anew and the other trees nearest whose branches interlaced with it. Then, with a sharp "Come on, Jim," he started towards the knoll, eyeing the branches overhead as he went. The rest of the party followed at a discreet distance.

Crippled as he was, Jim could not climb the steep face of the knoll, but his master helped him up. The instant he entered the cave he growled savagely, and once more the stiff hair rose along his back. Blackstock watched in silence for a moment. He had never before noticed, on Jim's part, any special hostility toward bears, whom he was quite accustomed to trailing. He glanced up at the big branch that overhung the entrance, and conviction settled on his face. Then he whispered, sharply, "Seek him, Jim." And Jim set off at once, as fast as he could limp, along the trail of the bear.

"Come on, boys," called Blackstock to his posse. "Ef we can't find Black Dan we may as well hev a little bear-hunt to fill in the time. Jim appears to hev a partic'lar grudge agin that bear."

The men closed up eagerly, expecting to find that Blackstock, with Jim's help, had at last discovered some real signs of Black Dan. When they saw that there was still nothing more than that old bear's trail, which they had already examined, Long Jackson began to grumble.

"We kin hunt bear any day," he growled. "I guess Tug ain't no keener after bear this day than you be," commented Mac Donald. "He's got *somethin'* up his sleeve, you see!"

"Mebbe it's a tame b'ar, a *trained* b'ar,

an' Black Dan's a-ridin' him horseback," suggested Big Andy.

Blackstock, who was close at Jim's heels, a few paces ahead of the rest, turned with one of his rare, ruminative laughs.

"That's quite an idea of yours, Andy," he remarked, stooping to examine one of those great clawed footprints in a patch of soft soil.

"But even *trained* b'ar hain't got wings," commented MacDonald again. "An' there's a good three hundred yards atween the spot where Black Dan's trail peters out an' the nearest b'ar track. I guess yer interestin' hipotheesis don't quite fill the bill—eh, Andy?"

"Anyways," protested the big Oromocto man, "ye'll all notice *one* thing queer about this here b'ar track. It goes *straight*. Mostly a b'ar will go wanderin' off this way an' that, to nose at an old root, er grub up a bed o' toadstools. But *this* b'ar keeps right on, as ef he had important business somewhere straight ahead. That's just the way he'd go ef someone *was* a-ridin' him horse-back."

Andy had advanced his proposition as a joke, but now he was inclined to take it seriously and to defend it with warmth.

"Well," said Long Jackson, "we'll all chip in, when we git our money back, an' buy ye a bear, Andy, an' ye shall ride it up every day from the mills to the post office. It'll save ye quite a few minutes in gittin' *to* the post office. It don't matter about yer gittin' away."

The big Oromocto lad blushed, but laughed good-naturedly. He was so much in love with the little widow who kept the post office that nothing pleased him more than to be teased about her.

For the Deputy's trained eyes, as for Jim's trained nose, that bear-track was an easy one to follow. Nevertheless, progress was slow, for Blackstock would halt from time to time to interrogate some claw-print with special minuteness, and from time to time Jim would stop to lie down and lick gingerly at his bandage, tormented by the aching of his wound.

Late in the afternoon, when the level shadows were black upon the trail and the trailing had come to depend entirely on Jim's nose, Blackstock called a halt on the banks of a small brook and all sat down to eat their bread and cheese. Then they sprawled about, smoking, for the Deputy, apparently regarding the chase as a long one, was now in no great hurry. Jim lay on the wet sand, close to the brook's edge, while Blackstock, scooping up the water in double handfuls, let it fall in an icy stream, on the dog's bandaged leg.

"Hev ye got any reel idee to come an' go on, Tug?" demanded Long Jackson at last, blowing a long, slow jet of smoke from his lips, and watching it spiral upwards across a bar of light just over his head.

"I hev," said Blackstock.

"An' air ye sure it's a good one—good enough to drag us 'way out here on?" persisted Jackson.

"I'm bankin' on it," answered Blackstock.

"An' so's Jim, I'm thinkin," suggested MacDonald, tentatively.

"Jim's idee an' mine ain't the same, exackly," vouchsafed Blackstock, after a pause, "but I guess they'll come to the same thing in the end. They're fittin' in with each other fine, so fur!"

"What'll ye bet that ye're not mistaken, the both o' yez?" demanded Jackson.

"Yer wages fur the whole summer!" answered Blackstock promptly.

Long looked satisfied. He knocked the ashes out of his pipe and proceeded to refill it.

"Oh, ef ye're so sure as that, Tug" he drawled, "I guess I ain't takin' any this time."

For a couple of hours after sunset the party continued to follow the trail, depending now entirely upon Jim's leadership. The dog, revived by his rest and his master's cold-water treatment, limped forward at a good pace, growling from time to time as a fresh pang in his wound reminded him anew of his enemy.

"How Jim 'pears to hate that bear!" remarked big Andy once.

"He does *that!*" agreed Blackstock. "An' he's goin' to git his own back, too, I'm thinkin', afore long."

Presently the moon rose round and yellow through the tree-tops, and the going became less laborious. Jim seemed untiring now. He pressed on so eagerly that Blackstock concluded the object of his vindictive pursuit, whatever it was, must be now not far ahead.

Another hour, and the party came out suddenly upon the bank of a small pond. Jim, his nose to earth, started to lead the way around it, towards the left. But Blackstock stopped him, and halted his party in the dense shadows.

The opposite shore was in the full glare of the moonlight. There, close to the water's

edge, stood a little log hut, every detail of it standing out as clearly as in daylight. It was obviously old, but the roof had been repaired with new bark and poles and the door was shut, instead of sagging half open on broken hinges after the fashion of the doors of deserted cabins.

Blackstock slipped a leash from his pocket and clipped it onto Jim's collar.

"I'm thinkin', boys, we'll git some information yonder about that bear, ef we go the right way about inquirin'. Now, Saunders, you go round the pond to the right and steal up alongshore, through the bushes, to within forty paces of the hut. You, Mac, an' Big Andy, you two go round same way, but git well back into the timber, and come up *behind* the hut to within about the same distance. There'll be a winder on that side, likely.

"When ye're in position give the call o' the big horned owl, not too loud. An' when I answer with the same call twice, then close in. But keep a good-sized tree atween you an' the winder, for ye never know what a bear kin do when he's trained. I'll bet big Andy's seen bears that could shoulder a gun like a man! So look out for yourselves. Long an' Jim an' me, we'll follow the trail o' the bear right round this end o' the pond—an' ef I'm not mistaken it'll lead us right up to the door o' that there hut. Some bears hev a taste in regard to where they sleep."

As noiselessly as shadows the party melted away in opposite directions.

The pond lay smooth as glass under the flooding moonlight, reflecting a pale star or two where the moon-path grudgingly gave it space.

After some fifteen minutes a lazy, muffled hooting floated across the pond. Five minutes later the same call, the very voice of the wilderness at midnight, came from the the deep of the woods behind the hut.

Blackstock, with Jackson close behind him and Jim pulling eagerly on the leash, was now within twenty yards of the hut door, but hidden behind a thick young fir tree. He breathed the call of the horned owl—a mellow, musical call, which nevertheless brings terror to all the small creatures of the wilderness—and then, after a pause, repeated it softly.

He waited for a couple of minutes motionless. His keen ears caught the snapping of a twig close behind the hut.

"Big Andy's big feet that time," he muttered to himself. "That boy'll never be much good on the trail."

Then, leaving Jim to the care of Jackson, he slipped forward to another and bigger tree not more than a dozen paces from the cabin. Standing close in the shadow of the trunk, and drawing his revolver, he called sharply as a gun-shot—"Dan Black."

Instantly there was a thud within the hut as of someone leaping from a bunk.

"Dan Black," repeated the Deputy, "the game's up. I've got ye surrounded. Will ye come out quietly an' give yerself up, or do ye want trouble?"

"Waal, no, I guess I don't want no more trouble," drawled a cool voice from within the hut. "I guess I've got enough o' my own already. I'll come out, Tug."

The door was flung open, and Black Dan, with his hands held up, stalked forth into the moonlight.

With a roar Jim sprang out from behind the fir tree, dragging long Jackson with him by the sudden violence of his rush.

"Down, Jim, *down!*" ordered Blackstock. "Lay down an' shut up." And Jim, grumbling in his throat, allowed Jackson to pull him back by the collar.

Blackstock advanced and clicked the handcuffs on to Black Dan's wrists. Then he took the revolver and knife from the prisoner's belt, and motioned him back into the hut.

"Bein' pretty late now," said Blackstock. "I guess we'll accept yer hospitality for the rest o' the night."

"Right ye are, Tug," assented Dan. "Ye'll find tea an' merlasses, an' a bite o' bacon in the cupboard yonder."

As the rest of the party came in Black Dan nodded to them cordially, a greeting which they returned with more or less sheepish grins.

"Excuse me ef I don't shake hands with ye, boys," said he, "but Tug here says the state o' me health makes it bad for me to use me arms." And he held up the handcuffs.

"No apologies needed," said MacDonald.

Last of all came in Long Jackson, with Jim. Blackstock slipped the leash, and the dog lay down in a corner, as far from the prisoner as he could get.

In a few minutes the whole party were sitting about the tiny stove, drinking boiled tea and munching crackers and molasses—the prisoner joining in the feast as well as his manacled hands would permit. At length, with his mouth full of cracker, the Deputy remarked:

"That was clever of ye, Dan—durn' clever. I didn't know it was in ye."

The door was flung open, and Black Dan, with his hands held up, stalked forth into the moonlight.

"Not half so clever as you seein' through it the way you did, Tug," responded the prisoner handsomely.

"But darned ef *I* see through it *now*," protested Big Andy in a plaintive voice. "It's just about as clear as mud to *me*. Where's your wings, Dan? An' where in tarnation is that b'ar?"

The prisoner laughed triumphantly. Long Jackson and the others looked relieved, the Oromocto man having propounded the question which they had been ashamed to ask.

"It's jest this way," explained Blackstock. "When we'd puzzled Jim yonder—an' he *was* puzzled at us bein' such fools—ye'll recollect he sat down on his tail by that boot-print, an' tried to work out what we wanted of him. I was tellin' him to seek Black Dan, an' yet I was callin' him back off that there bear-track. *He* could smell Black Dan in the bear-track, but we couldn't. So we was doin' the best we could to mix him up.

"Well, he looked up into the big maple overhead. Then I saw where Black Dan had gone to. He'd jumped (that's why the bootprint was so heavy), an' caught that there branch, an' swung himself up into the tree. Then he worked his way along from tree to tree till he come to the cave. I saw by the way Jim took on in the cave that Black Dan had been *there* all right. For Jim hain't got no special grudge agin bear. Says I to myself, ef Jim smells Black Dan in that bear trail, then Black Dan must *be* in it, that's all!

"Then it comes over me that I'd once seen a big bear-skin in Dan's room at the Mills, an' as the picture of it come up agin in my mind, I noticed how the fore-paws and legs of it were missin'. With that I looked agin at the trail, as we went along Jim an' me. An' sure enough, in all them tracks there wasn't one print of a hind-paw. *They were all fore-paws.* Smart, very smart o' Dan, says I to myself. Let's see them ingenious socks o' yours, Dan."

"They're in the top bunk yonder," said Black Dan, with a weary air. "An' my belt and pouch, containin' the other stuff, that's all in the bunk, too. I may's well save ye the trouble o' lookin' for it, as ye'd find it anyways. I was *sure* ye'd never succeed in trackin' me down, so I didn't bother to hide it. An' I see now ye *wouldn't* 'a' got me, Tug, ef it hadn't 'a' been fer Jim. That's where I made the mistake o' my life, not stoppin' to make sure I'd done Jim up."

"No, Dan," said Blackstock, "ye're wrong there. Ef you'd done Jim up I'd have caught ye jest the same, in the long run, fer I'd never have quit the trail till I *did* git ye. An' when I got ye—well, I'd hev forgot myself, mebbe, an' only remembered that ye'd killed my best friend. Ef ye'd had as many lives as a cat, Dan, they wouldn't hev been enough to pay fer that dawg."

(Another story of Tug Blackstock and Jim next month.)

PASS ON YOUR ROYALS!

Last month we explained how the ROYAL *may be sent post free to British soldiers and sailors at home or abroad, in camp, or detained as prisoners of war. The only conditions were that the copies should be clean, in good condition, and not more than a year old. This last restriction is now removed. You may send* ROYALS *of any age, though recent numbers are likely to be most appreciated.*

Simply hand as many copies of the ROYAL *as you can collect over the counter at any post-office. Don't wrap them up. They cannot be sent to any particular soldier or sailor, but the authorities distribute them to the very best advantage.*

A batch of magazines will insure our men many cheery hours. Won't you do your bit, and send some along?—ED. R.M.

"SHIPSHAPE."

I'd like to build a big ship an' take my maid a-sailin'
Out about the world a bit where her wants to go;
I'd build it strong an' vitty, fit to weather any gale in,
Tho' her bain't one to grumple when a gale o' wind do blow.
But mine be a lil' boat, lug an' mizzen rig,
A sixteen-footer, so her bain't so big;
Fine 'tis for fishin' up an' down the bay,
But 'twouldn' do for carryin' my maid away.

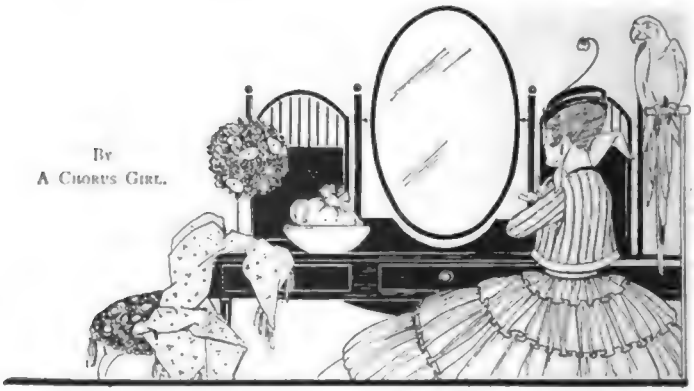
I'd like to build a big ship as wouldn' find the billows
Lippin' at the gunnel when the thunder planets come;
I'd have a vitty cabin an' a bunk with dinky pillows
For my maid to slaip in as aisy as to home.
But mine be a lil' boat open to the sky;
Big bars o' ballast on the bilge boards lie.
'Tis bare boards to slaip on, becalmed in the bay,
An' 'twouldn' do for carryin' my maid away.

I want to build a big ship. . . . An' many more be makin'
Big ships in dreams for the maids they love;
Out about they go, galyent cruises takin',
Allays on a keenly tide with sunshine above.
Mine be a lil' boat . . . an' yet I make
Cruises in my mind that be good to take,
Pictures of a big ship sailin' out to say,
Where I be a-carryin' my maid away.

Bernard Moore.

The CHORUS GIRL in WAR-TIME

By
A Chorus Girl.



Most people have a very hazy idea of a chorus girl's life, and a mistaken conception of the motives which influence her career. In the following article a chorus girl reveals some of the secrets of her profession, and discusses the change which has come over chorus-land since the war.

The musical comedy world consists of two great sections—Principals and Chorus. The division is sharp, the difference sharper. In dramatic work, without music tacked on to buck things up, small-part people and big-part people are in much the same boat. Their standing is more or less equal. The only difference is that some of them have already got there, while the others are merely undergoing that process known as getting there.

But in musical comedy it is quite different. The Principals have got there—by luck, influence, or real talent, and, as principals, they are allowed to dress as they like, do what they like, go where they please—and the management says nothing. Whereas the chorus girl has by no means got there, and the queer part of it all is that she doesn't really care two straws, in the majority of cases, whether she ever gets there or not. She's not out for Art, as such—generally speaking. Chorus girls have a mission in life, but it has very little to do with that branch of dramatic work which changes people from individuals into artistes.

The chorus girl is not an artiste, and has no ambitions in that direction, as a rule. She's just a chorus girl, and has all her work cut out to live up to her reputation.

A great deal is expected of chorus girls. They work jolly hard, though people don't always believe that statement. Other actresses work hard at their art, studying new parts, watching other players, improving themselves artistically every day. Now, a chorus girl has no art at which she can work hard. On the stage she has only to look fascinating, wear bizarre frocks, and raise her right leg or extend her left arm when the producer tells her she must.

So she expends her energies on work, apart from the theatre. Most chorus girls do their hardest work outside the stage door. They have to be seen lunching, dining, and supping at the smartest restaurants, and you can't do these things in dowdy garments. They have to be snapped on the river, at

Hendon, by the seashore, on the links, in a racing car, balloon, or aeroplane—and these pursuits mean clothes, and clothes mean money.

Who says the ornaments of the chorus don't work hard? Of course they do. The life outlined above takes some living, believe me, and that is a chorus girl's work. She may have a father and mother who own a little fried fish shop down at Brixton, she may need her two golden sovereigns, received weekly, for the absolute necessities of life, but she must be seen here, there, and everywhere, with as many men as possible, quite three nights out of six.

And if she *does* go home by tube or tram, on the other nights, to eat pickled onions and cheese in the back parlour—why, the contrast is all the greater. That's Life—as seen by a chorus girl.

It is an undoubted fact that chorus girls are often more valuable to the management than a star who is drawing a big salary, and has her name in large letters all over London. You see, the star is clever, and people pay to see her, but they are not the people who keep a musical comedy theatre going—no, indeed! It is the chorus that keeps musical comedy on its legs—the chorus that lures men into the same stall or box night after night, after night. . . .

Talent isn't wanted in the chorus. The girl who trips into the manager's office wearing ermine or sables, and says she'd *love* to be in the chorus at £2 a week, and then trips out and climbs into a nice, neat little car—that is the girl who is worth her weight in gold to a management.

Instead of learning to sing, the would-be successful chorus girl should learn how to look smart on a small salary, and how to induce someone to put a few hundreds into the show, or to let those in authority clearly understand that several stalls nightly will be filled simply and solely on her account!

Being a chorus girl is a business, a trade—just like any other, only most people don't understand it.

Young and pretty girls go into the chorus for three reasons.

First, because they are ambitious, and perhaps really clever, so they take the road through chorus-land, hoping it may lead them to ultimate success. These girls are in the minority, and in most cases they realise that they have made a big mistake—go into drama or farce, make a name, and then come back to musical comedy! On the other hand, when they see that things are fairly hopeless, from their point of view, they may exercise a woman's inevitable privilege, and change their minds and methods. There is a good deal of mind-changing in chorus-land.

The second type of chorus girl goes on the stage out of sheer vanity. She gets into the chorus because she is smart or pretty, and knows somebody who knows one of the directors. She doesn't want to play a part—she couldn't if one was literally chucked

Most chorus girls do their hardest work outside the stage door. They have to be seen at Hendon, on the links, or on the river, and they must learn to look smart on a small salary.

The girl who trips expensively gowned into the manager's office, and says she'd *love* to be in the chorus, and trips out to a smart car afterwards, is worth her weight in gold to a management.

at her. She has about as much brains as a fly, but she looks pretty, and she can be relied upon to dress well, and to bring her friends to the theatre, and so she remains a chorus girl for a long time, until she proves too old, even for the back row.

The third type of chorus girl is the real type, the true type. She goes into the chorus, and treats it as a business proposition. She knows exactly what is expected of her, and she makes it her duty to live up to those expectations. She becomes a chorus girl because she regards her appearance as a marketable commodity, and chooses to take advantage of the fact that she is decidedly attractive. Also she wants to find a husband —in the peerage, if possible, and she knows that if she becomes a secretary, or a typist, or a milliner, she will never meet any men above her own class, and certainly never any with two sixpences to rub together!

She likes money, she wants money, and so she becomes a chorus girl. She adores a good time, and she knows she is sure to get it in the chorus. She is generous, and good-hearted, and clear-headed, a business-woman in the truest sense of the word. Her views are nothing to do with anybody except herself, and any enterprising management which puts her on the stage in glorious garments, and rakes in half-guineas cheerfully over the box-office counter.

And, oh! the rubbish that is talked about art in the chorus-world—by outsiders. Some people have a fixed idea that every star was once a chorus girl. Rot! Stars may have been in the chorus once for one production, and then rushed off on tour, in a part, and stuck on tour for years before getting a chance in London. But that isn't being a *real* chorus girl. Why, in London to-day there are chorus girls smiling away across the footlights, who have been chorus girls for years!

They are the genuine article. They've never spoken a word on the stage, and they don't want to. They just drift on, from play to play, theatre to theatre, always in the chorus. And it isn't all jam and bouquets, either.

Things are awfully hard sometimes and luck is jolly bad. Everybody can't be lucky always.

The great game is to hide a run of bad luck from discerning managerial eyes; to dress smartly, even if it means going to bed hungry, and forgetting that a fire is considered necessary in winter-time, and getting into debt. And then, when luck changes, there is always a chance to "pick up" again.

In a typical chorus girls' dressing-room, what do you think is most generally talked about? Art? Work? No! Men and money and ways and means! How to buy effective clothes without going "broke"; how to keep things above water at home, and

still put up a bluff at the theatre. We don't discuss ethics in chorus-land, but we've got our heads screwed on jolly tight all the same, and our sense may be truly called "common" sense.

Chorus-land is full of tragedies, and tragi-comedies, too. It was bad enough in peace days, but when war came it looked like being one long tragedy for the big army of chorus girls. In one fell swoop all the things that meant most to them were swept away. The men who filled the stalls, the men who raised chorus girls to the peerage, the men with motor-cars and money and rank—those were among the first to go!

Yes, the first few months of the war spelt ruination and desolation to scores of girls in the chorus. Their means of existence, and in many cases the reasons for their existence had vanished—there won't be many footlight peeresses for a long, long time to come, if ever again.

And then the change came—the change that is likely to prove the chorus girl's salvation. She began to realise that she would have to fight for her daily bread, and fight hard. So she began to work, to take an interest in singing, and dancing, and elocution, because these things might bring fame and fortune later on, since other roads were closed. She began to understand that if she wanted to get on in this world it must be through her own efforts and merits—and not on the strength of someone's money and recommendation. So the chorus world has moved up one huge step in ambition.

And then came the wounded, and the hundreds and thousands of khaki-clad figures, waiting to serve their King and Country, and turning to those places where things are lightest and brightest, and it is easiest to forget, while the waiting-time drags on. Musical comedy is flourishing to-day. The stalls are full—the boxes are full—and the chorus is more popular than ever. But with what a difference! The men who sit in the stalls have changed, and the girls on the stage have changed, too.

Chorus girls are learning to manage on very little money. They are trying to keep smart, and succeed in looking prettier than ever, without spending a quarter of the money they flung away heedlessly in other times. And they are proud and happy to lunch and dine somewhere, quite simply, with a man who wears khaki—whether he is rich or poor, peer or commoner. That is how the inhabitants of chorus-land are "doing their bit."

Things can never be quite the same again for chorus girls, but a threatened tragedy has become their salvation. Ask some of them if they were happier among the flesh-pots of Egypt, or as they are to-day—and learn a great truth from their answer.

A run of bad luck must always be hidden from managerial eyes, and a chorus girl must dress smartly even though it means going to bed hungry and forgoing fires in winter-time.

For Soldiers and Sailors Too

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a soldier or sailor. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The C.O., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

ALL THE SAME IN THE END

OLD LADY (to soldier): "Will you please tell me where I can find my son?"

SOLDIER: "What does he belong to?"

OLD LADY: "I don't quite know what he's in?"

SOLDIER: "Well, what's his name?"

OLD LADY: "Smith."

SOLDIER: "That won't help much. What's his rank?"

OLD LADY: "Oh! he's a general."

SOLDIER (in surprise): "A general! Are you quite sure?"

OLD LADY: "Well, I'm not quite sure whether he's a general or a corporal, but I do know that he is a 'ral of some sort."

THE SOFT ANSWER.

It was 9.15 p.m. in billets behind the firing-line somewhere in France, and, as usual, the troops were having their evening concert. All was going well, till in came the orderly sergeant and ordered them to stop singing.

One of the concert party, a bombardier who was in charge, spoke up, saying that he had got permission from the C.O. to sing till 9.30 p.m., but this did not suit the sergeant, who turned on him and said:

"Bombardier ——, if you have a complaint I'll take it."

There was silence for a moment; then the bombardier said:

"Well, I've got a sick headache, sir."

At this the men roared with laughter and the sergeant walked away, but whether he took the complaint or not is not known.

Fed Up with the War.

A CHESTNUT FROM THE FLEET.

The scene was Commander's Defaulters, and a stoker was "in the rattle" for some small crime.

COMMANDER (to party of Naval Police and witnesses round him): "Who brings the allegation against this man?"

ILLITERATE SHIP'S CORPORAL (saluting): "Please, sir, I am the alligator!"

THE PASSIONATE SOLDIER TO HIS JAM.

Tickler's Jam, Tickler's Jam,
How I love Tom Tickler's Jam,
Plum and apple in one pound pots
Sent from England in ten ton lots.
Every night when I'm asleep,
I'm dreaming that I am
Bombing the poor old Germans' trench
With Tommy Tickler's Jam.

PUTTING IT GENTLY.

VERY NERVOUS CHAPLAIN (to body of troops): "And for three days and three nights Jonah was in the whale's—eh—er!—and for three days and three nights Jonah was in the whale's—eh—hum—er!—and for three days and three nights Jonah was in the whale's society."

CHANGED IN TRANSIT.

A company of Territorials were practising communications down a line of men in open order formation. One message was: "Hard pressed on left; send reinforcements at once." To the amazement of the receiving officer, this is how it got to him: "Hard up on left; send three-and-fourpence at once."

: HER SECRET :

By Carolyn Shipman.

"Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever:
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never."

I.

The lift of the Walsingham Hotel shot noiselessly up and down, bearing its burden of dainty, perfumed femininity. A click of the softly moving door, and another group of pretty women, with gleaming shoulders and happy eyes, stepped gaily out to join waiting men, with happy eyes and shining shirt-fronts.

This scene, which with varying elements she had watched so many nights, appeared to-night unusually gay and gleaming to Electra Colgan. She was watching it from her usual secluded corner, her pale eyes contracted with envious pain, her delicate hands convulsively clutching the arms of her velours chair.

It was almost more than she could bear! She felt inexpressibly desolate.

The bitter, humiliating fact loomed large in her memory to-night; not once in all her grey life, except with her father, had she been to a theatre with a man quite alone.

Thirty-eight years old—thirty-nine in two months, to be accurate, and that blank record facing her! It was unendurable.

Her father! Even the fish, a little stale, and the cold storage chicken served cold at dinner that night were not wholly unpalatable without his presence.

Presumably her father would die some day; but she would be old and grey when she finally came into possession of all his money. Of what use would it be to her then? Her only pleasures would be signing cheques for charitable institutions, and reading her name among the list of patronesses of charity concerts to which she never went.

Deprecatingly she glanced down at her gown—neat, ladylike, hopelessly unfashionable, void of all elegance, of that pale, indistinctive shade called crushed strawberry, with unerring misjudgment inevitably selected by faded blondes of uncertain age, and as rigorously avoided by even a Venus de Milo.

How long had she worn that gown? Five years at least, and still it showed no sign of wear. A mistake to buy such cast-iron material!

Ah, well! What did it matter? No one ever noticed her clothes.

A page-boy approached her with a telephone message. A diversion, even though barren! Her father would not be home until midnight. She need not sit up for him.

Involuntarily she drew a long sigh of relief. One free evening! Free? To what use could she possibly put freedom? How free is a woman alone in a great London hotel? She could not go out and walk the streets, like a man, to find diversion in the kaleidoscopic scenes of the West End at the theatre hour. There was no one to talk to, nothing to do.

She shifted uneasily in her chair, oppressed with the hopelessness of life. The sudden movement caused her evening newspaper to slip from her lap to the floor.

Then the miracle happened!

Forward, apparently from nowhere, sprang a male figure, rescued the paper quickly, and restored it to her with a courtly bow.

A strange man, and bowing to her! She looked at him dumbly.

"You dropped your paper. Allow me!" he said.

Her heart beat shockingly at this wild adventure into the unknown.

"Thank you! You are very kind," she managed to gasp breathlessly.

She looked at him helplessly, then with increasing interest. She saw a short, fat, bald-headed man, with clear blue eyes and cheeks like plump pink pin-cushions. Electra had never seen such a high, shining bald head on any human being. There was merely a fringe of blonde hair above the neck. Young he was, too—not over forty. She liked the kindly, impersonal expression of the eyes.

"May I talk to you? You seem to be alone, as I am."

Might he talk to her! Might a swimmer be permitted to save a drowning woman! She closed her eyes briefly, with the sensation of sea-water gushing down her throat. Her impulse was to throw her arms around this strong swimmer and cling with all her might.

"Yes, certainly."

She hesitated awkwardly.

"Won't you sit down?"

He sat down on the edge of an adjacent chair, with a mixture of directness and fussiness which seemed to her quite irresistible. She watched him with perturbed spirit, wondering breathlessly what he would do next. Recklessly she resolved to drift with the tide.

"Do you live in this hotel?"

"I've lived here ten years, in the same suite of rooms—with my father."

"You must like it."

"I'm used to it. Father likes it."

Why must she always mention her father, as if she were merely a half-grown child?

"Your father?" His tone trailed off interrogatively.

"It's close to the tube, and often he's not home from business until late."

The blue eyes turned towards her with a more personal gaze. Suddenly, with a nervous twist of the neck, he shot his head out sidewise, as if his high collar held him in a vice. Then he cleared his throat with a queer nasal grunt, drew out a card-case, took from it a card, and handed it to Electra.

"Allow me to introduce myself."

With keen, trembling interest she read the magic words:

"Mr. Geoffrey de Rolla, Adelphi Club."

"My name is Electra Colgan," she replied simply, reflecting bitterly that it was quite unnecessary to prefix the hated "Miss." He must guess her unmarried state.

With alert, business-like manner he drew out a black seal address book, and turned quickly to the "C's." Next came a fountain pen, and her name was neatly inscribed in a round, schoolboy hand.

"Walsingham Hotel?" The pen was briefly suspended in mid-air while he awaited her reply.

"Yes." She hesitated, rather taken aback by his swift, workmanlike ways. "My permanent address is father's office," she added slowly, again annoyed at another reference to her father. She had not realised how inextricably her lot was bound up with his.

The pen still paused in mid-air.

"3920 Barclay Street, E.C. Care of Peter Colgan."

Electra's vanity was immensely flattered as she watched him complete the address and tuck the little black book carefully away in his waistcoat pocket.

"Where is the Adelphi Club?" she ventured timidly. "In London?"

"In New York, where I live."

"Oh!" She hesitated briefly, looking at him with fresh interest. "I thought you weren't an Englishman."

"Why?"

"You don't speak like one."

Suddenly she stopped, aghast. Probably never before in her life had she delivered herself thus freely to a man.

"I'd like to live in New York," she ventured.

"Have you ever been there?"

"No, I've never been outside of England. Father believes one should see one's own country first."

She blushed hotly at the thought of how many times over one could "see one's own country" and all the rest of the world besides in thirty-eight years. She hoped he couldn't guess her age.

"It may be well to see one's own country first," he admitted indifferently, "but there's so much interest on the other side."

"Your name isn't American—de Rolla."

"It's Spanish. Our family dates back to the fifth century."

Electra gazed at him with increasing respect, almost awe.

"Doesn't the 'de' mean of the nobility?"

"Yes," he admitted, almost shyly. "I'm really Viscount de Rolla, but I never use the title."

"Why not?" she demanded eagerly. "It would sound so grand—'Viscount de Rolla.'"

He shook his head deprecatingly. "I'd rather not. Once when I was in Madrid,"

he pursued, still almost shyly, and with that nervous twitch of the neck which seemed to indicate a collar tight as a vice, "I was invited to a reception at the court of the present King."

Electra stared at him as if hypnotised.

"As I was about to enter the throne-room the herald stopped me, repeated my name respectfully, and said, 'Señor, a de Rolla has the right to enter the presence of his Majesty with his hat on.' So I had to go in with my head covered."

Electra gazed at him with awe, marvelling at his humility. To think that she, plain Electra Colgan, a nobody, was talking to a Spanish grandee, who had the right to enter the presence of the King of Spain bonneted!

"Have you had coffee?" he exclaimed abruptly, as she tried to recover her faculties and give the appearance of not being too much overcome by his recent revelations. "Waiter! Bring two *demi-tasses* and—what liqueur would you like, Miss Colgan?"

Miss Colgan! He knew, then!

"I don't want any, thank you. I never——"

"Yes, you will. To-night is different—the beginning of a new era."

A new era! If he only realised how very new it was, and how delightful.

"Waiter! Bring one *crème de menthe* and one cognac. That won't hurt you—it's only green peppermint."

She watched his carefully manicured hands as he lifted his glass. They fascinated her—they were so strong and capable and white and well cared for. She curled her own rough nails tightly into her palms, resolving to visit a manicurist the next day.

"Do you know many people in London?" He sipped his cognac luxuriously, then drew out a pigskin case and offered Electra a cigarette.

She shook her head smilingly.

"I thought all women smoked! You'll come to it! I'm going to teach you to smoke before long."

Before long! A delightful thrill coursed up and down her spinal column. So this was not to be their only meeting! She gave herself up to the sweet intoxication of the thought.

Again a sudden movement, and he drew out from another pocket another leather object and unfolded it before her expectant eyes.

"My wife and two kiddies."

So he was married! It did not occur to her to reflect that it was rather nice of him to tell her, that not every married man would have done so at the start. She could not help envying his wife.

"Are you engaged this evening?" He turned to her with one of the darting movements which were part of his charm for her, in that they promised action.

She hesitated and glanced at the clock. Five minutes past nine. What a new world the past half-hour had opened up to her!

"No. I'm free this evening." She tried to lay a slight stress on "this," to indicate that other evenings found her occupied, but the lie stuck in her throat. The only word in the whole sentence which seemed to her emphasised was the "No." She hoped it did not sound too eager.

Rolla sat forward on his chair and addressed her cosily.

"Let's be reckless!"

Reckless! She started and gazed at him fixedly. All her life long hadn't she wanted to be reckless? Here at last was her chance, brought to her by fate, without her having even to move from her chair. What propitious planet was hovering over the Walsingham Hotel to-night?

He observed her startled look and mistook its meaning.

"I don't mean anything very reckless."

Swiftly her heart sank.

"I only meant let's go out and see the town."

Up flew her heart again, like any strip of silly mercury.

"You mean——oh, I don't know!" she gasped, almost fainting with the unexpected joy of a real adventure.

"I mean take a taxi, drive round for a while, and then go somewhere for supper," he replied easily.

Could it be that he was talking to her, Electra Colgan? It sounded as remote as an itinerary to the moon.

"If it won't take too long!" She resolved to plunge in, regardless of consequences. She would have one night of pleasure, if it were her last on earth. "I must be home early. Father——"

"We'll be in long before he is," interrupted Rolla kindly, divining the cause of her hesitation. "We shan't be gone two hours."

As the lift bore her up to the third floor her heart throbbed exultingly. With trembling fingers she selected the least ugly of three evening wraps, a cumbersome affair of dull light brown trimmed with heavy brown

and gold braid. A shining light in her eyes startled her as she looked into the mirror to arrange her hair. The flush on her cheeks was most becoming, she observed with shy pleasure.

Hastily she seized a bottle of perfume, tipped a large amount of its orientally heavy contents on to her finest hand-embroidered handkerchief, and sped happily to the lift which was to carry her from the third floor to the seventh heaven.

When the door glided open for her, as so many times she had seen it open noiselessly and graciously for the envied beauties, there was *her* escort, with shining shirt-front, top hat, and expectant eyes.

The masterly way in which he helped her into the taxi-cab charmed her.

She drew a long sigh of shy happiness.

The night was warm, a rare late March evening, when the deceptive balm of spring was in the air. The cool breeze flowing on her hot cheeks was refreshing.

"Up Piccadilly to the Park!" he commanded.

She leant back luxuriously, breathing in the subtle night odours. Speech seemed unnecessary, so content was she.

"Do you know many people in London?"

His question rather jarred on her mood. She came out of her reverie regretfully. "Not many," she began; then, fancying a sudden chill in his manner, she added half apologetically, "that is, not well."

"What is your father's business?"

Here at last was firm ground.

"He's an importer."

"An importer?" Without turning she could feel the magnetism of his blue, impersonal eyes compelling her to further disclosures.

"Of coffee, Oriental stuffs, and things like that." Her tone betrayed her indifference.

"How interesting!" He stated this as a great discovery.

It wasn't at all interesting! She never owned any of the lovely Oriental silks for gowns, never tasted any of the delicious coffee; only occasionally did an odd bottle of heavy perfume with some queer trade name come her way, and she was obliged to use it instead of the subtle scents for which her soul yearned. But she was glad if he found an importer's business interesting.

Rolla's mind did not appear to dwell on the subject; it sped on lightly, as if impatient of restraint. They had crossed the road at Hyde Park Corner and turned into the Park.

"I know everyone in New York and London and Paris, and yet I'm the loneliest man in the world."

Electra turned to him impulsively. Surprise held her dumb. Then an intense wave of sympathy overwhelmed her and carried her perilously near to him. With an involuntary gesture of comprehension she drew back.

"I'm so sorry you are lonely. I know what that means." Her voice was warm with sympathy.

"To the Splendide," he called suddenly to the chauffeur. Again his competence charmed her. She felt so securely protected.

"Do you know that you have very pretty hands?" he remarked critically, as they waited in the rose-tinted light of the restaurant for the little supper which he had skilfully and quickly ordered.

Instinctively she curled her nails inwards, resolved again to visit the manicurist the next day; then hastily opened her hands, palms upward, and looked at them curiously. In all her life no one had ever told her that her hands were pretty.

"Do you think so?" She felt an awkward schoolgirl. All the woman-of-the-world poise had disappeared.

Then the music began and Electra was transported. She closed her eyes and listened with rapture to the passionate allurement of the violins. She hardly cared to eat, so keen was her enjoyment of the sensuous atmosphere of the scene. The theatre crowd had not yet come in, but the room was comfortably filled. The fragrant Chablis seemed fiery gold flowing into her veins. Its bouquet intoxicated her. She was happy almost beyond words.

Suddenly she thought of the hour and grew nervous.

"What time is it?" she demanded abruptly, her thoughts reverting to her father. Her happy smile vanished. She felt old and tired.

"It's early yet—only a quarter-to-eleven."

"I think I must go home," she faltered reluctantly, chafing against the possibility of her father's questions. What if he were to come home early? How could she ever explain her innocent escapade? Who was this man that had so instantly won her confidence? She knew nothing whatever about him except that he appeared to be a gentleman and had taken pity on her loneliness.

The blood surged into her face. She

["HER SECRET" continued overleaf.]

looked at him helplessly. He seemed to divine her thoughts, for a kindly look came into his blue, impersonal eyes, and he said gently:

"Very well, if you wish it, we will go. Waiter, bring me the bill!"

Arrived at the hotel, Electra inquired, with as much nonchalance as she could summon, whether Mr. Colgan had yet come home. He had not. She drew a long breath of relief, looked at the hall clock hastily, and saw that she had several moments to spare.

"You have been very good to me." They were standing in the corner of the room where they had met. "I thank you for a very pleasant evening." She dared not say how pleasant.

"It is I who thank you," he replied, with generous protestation. "If it hadn't been for you I should probably have spent a very dull evening at my Club talking to some hopeless bore."

He held her hand gravely for a moment.

"I hope this is not to be our only evening together."

Her heart leapt at his words. Delightful vistas opened before her now vivid imagination. Then she thought of her father.

"I hope not." She hesitated. "My father——"

With rare tact he met this difficulty. "He wouldn't understand." His manner was simple, almost childlike. "One can't always explain such things to a third person."

A great load shifted from her heart She pressed his hand warmly. "I'm so glad you understand. I do want to see you again."

She blushed at her boldness, but his matter-of-fact manner put her instantly at her ease. Her grateful smile beamed at him through the door of the disappearing lift.

II.

By a stroke of good luck, the next few days were busy ones for Peter Colgan. Two important consignments had arrived from the East, and a third one was expected hourly; even then the boat was in quarantine, he announced at breakfast the next morning. He did not know at what hour he should be home that evening, probably after midnight, and the play to which he had vaguely promised to take Electra some time that week must be indefinitely postponed. He awaited her usual protest of querulous disappointment.

"Very well, father; if you're too busy now, we shall have to wait."

With difficulty she subdued the exultation in her voice. Colgan, absorbed in his thoughts, was oblivious of her trepidation, yet vaguely grateful for her unusual cheerfulness. She watched his tall, lanky figure disappear through the revolving door of the hotel entrance, and then sped to the manicurist.

"What pretty hands you have," observed the girl generously, as Electra's left hand lay idly soaking in a sweet-scented soapy lotion. "But you mustn't let them go so long again; they're in quite bad condition."

That afternoon she turned out all her wardrobe and sorted over her gowns, to find two or three less old-fashioned than the crushed strawberry one of the evening before. She tried them on one after another, examining the effect critically in her large cheval glass. Finally she chose for that evening a simple black lace cut modestly low in the neck.

Should she wear her mother's pearl necklace, reserved only for state occasions? She hesitated. Perhaps he wouldn't be there after all. Even so, why not the pearls? Her father would have no chance to see them and exclaim.

Her hair! What a blessing she had thought about it in time. Down she sped to the coiffeur, in a fever lest she should have to wait and thus be late for dinner. More good luck! He could shampoo her at once.

"How shall I dress Madame's hair?" inquired the obsequious Frenchman, hope of a tip warming his voice almost to tenderness.

"In the latest fashion, please," she replied carelessly, wondering with fatalistic recklessness what the result would be.

The result far exceeded her imagination. Never before had she known she had so much hair—light, fluffy, like spun silk. Could that really be Electra Colgan in the mirror? She was fascinated by the vision. What, truly, had she been doing all these years? Her light had certainly been hidden under a very extinguishing bushel.

"Madame has very beautiful hair," remarked the tactful coiffeur, with the final professional pats so necessary to the finished work of art. "Just a *soupçon* of the pencil for the eyebrows? Just a *soupçon!*" he breathed insinuatingly.

Out from some mysterious corner came the pencil, and before she could protest feebly, a few deft touches wrought still greater transformation. Her eyes appeared luminous in their new settings. She was charmed by the effect, happy as a child.

Never was tip more cheerfully bestowed on human being.

By half-past eight that evening she had given him up. Undoubtedly he was dining out with some of his numerous friends, since he knew everyone worth knowing. Her heart sank in envious loneliness.

Ten minutes to nine! At last the revolving door swung quickly around and shot forth the squat figure for which she was waiting. Her heart almost stopped beating. He marched rapidly to the desk, with aggressive, fat stride, asked for his letters and stood reading them. Unobserved she could watch him.

Then, as if by a sudden word of command, he quickly faced about and darted swiftly in her direction. Arrived before her he stopped quite still, speechless at her transformation. Instantly recovering himself, he bowed profoundly over her hand, took off his overcoat with his characteristic jerky movement, and settled himself down on the edge of the chair.

"You are looking charming this evening." His quick eye travelled appreciatively from her hair to the string of pearls around her neck. She blushed with rare pleasure as she recognised the frank admiration of his glance.

"I'm glad you think so." She opened her hands carelessly, unafraid now of his scrutiny of her highly polished nails.

"I dined at my club to-night, but I thought I would run round here for a moment to see if I could find you, by any chance.'

By any chance! How infinitely tactful he was.

"I think I'll take a room at my club—it's much more homelike than this hotel."

Electra's heart sank pitifully. Why had she dreamt that it could last? Nothing pleasant in life ever lasted for her.

"When do you think you will change?" Vainly she tried to make her voice sound careless. To her own ears it was tensely, pathetically unhappy.

"As a matter of fact, I've already moved," he admitted, vaguely conscious of her disappointment. "But it isn't far from here," he continued, his impersonal gaze resting first on her pearls, then on the beautiful ruby and diamond ring which she had brought out for the occasion from her mother's jewel-case.

"It isn't quite the same."

"I shall be coming over here almost every evening for my letters."

Almost every evening! A glimmer of hope, but it was not the same as if one roof covered them.

"We can go out again some night. Would you like that?"

Would she like it? A subtle, magnetic fluid seemed to animate her veins.

"Father is very busy every night this week. That's why——" She paused in confusion.

"I see." He nodded comprehendingly. Again his eyes sought her pearls. "You could wear a gown cut quite a bit lower than that. I can see the lines of your shoulders through the lace. They're very good."

She blushed uncomfortably, but his gaze was quite impersonal.

"I've studied at the Beaux Arts in Paris."

"Then you are an artist?"

Suddenly it occurred to her that he had said nothing of himself and his own interests except for a vague reference to business.

"A little of an artist, but more of a rolling stone, I fear," he replied deprecatingly. "I've even studied medicine."

When she rose to say good-night he bent over her hand and kissed it lightly, continental fashion.

"Good-night, dear heart!" he said simply.

She knew that gesture and words meant nothing, yet she thrilled ecstatically. As the lift bore her swiftly upwards she felt like the princess of an unknown island kingdom.

She slept happily and dreamlessly. At last she had come into her own. A man admired her!

Thus did they spend the following evenings, except Sunday, when her father did not go to his office.

On Monday evening, punctually at the usual hour, the revolving door of the hotel entrance again shot forth Rolla. Electra, nervously quiet, was sitting in her usual corner, dressed in a new violet gown, which her growing spirit of independence had led her to buy. It was very becoming to her, so the gracious saleswoman had said, and she could not well disbelieve her mirror.

No letters for him this evening. As he came swiftly towards her, instinctively she felt a rift in the lute. Silently she looked up at him, waiting in suspense.

"I'm sailing for home to-morrow."

Each word was a stone on her heart.

"To-morrow!" she gasped painfully.

("HER SECRET" continued overleaf.)

"Quite unexpectedly. A letter—sudden business calls me." Never had his manner been so jerky.

"Not bad news, I hope?"

"Oh, no!" he protested quickly, "but something that demands my immediate presence."

He vouchsafed no further information. She asked no questions.

"I ran in to say good-bye. I can stay only a few minutes, for I haven't packed yet."

"What boat?" she gasped helplessly.

"The White Star."

"You have been very good to me. I shall never forget it," she said simply, her voice trembling with emotion.

"It is *you* that have been good to me," he responded quickly. "Without your society I should have been very lonely. I will write to you." He pressed her hand warmly.

Almost before she could realise it, he had said good-bye and was gone. Wearily she dragged herself to her bedroom, sat down in front of her mirror and looked at the reflection. All life had left her face. She had suddenly aged ten years.

For a long time she sat staring at the mirror, her face tightly held between her cold, clammy hands. Then suddenly she arose, hunted for a newspaper, turned to the shipping page, and ran her eye down the column till she found the White Star advertisement. He had told her the line, but not the name of the boat. There it was! The *Gigantic*.

Excitedly she ran to her writing-desk, selected a sheet of her best notepaper and directed an envelope to "Geoffrey de Rolla, Esq., Passenger on the *Gigantic*."

After a pause, very slowly she wrote three words on the sheet of paper. "Thank you, dear." For several moments she looked at them silently. Then a hot tear fell on the paper. She blotted it hastily with her dainty handkerchief, folded the sheet, sealed it in the envelope, and quickly, lest she should change her mind, posted the letter in the letter-box beside the lift.

Once more in her bedroom, she cried her heart out to her sympathetic pillow.

III.

Early the following week, in leisurely fashion, Peter Colgan was reading his newspaper one morning at breakfast. Suddenly he exclaimed with satisfaction:

"Good work!"

Electra glanced up idly from the woman's page, which was her morning share of the paper.

"What's good work?" she inquired indifferently.

"Listen to this," replied her father exultantly.

"'Upon the arrival of the *Gigantic* at New York yesterday, George Rudd, *alias* Geoffrey de Rolla, was arrested, and will be deported to England to await trial for obtaining money on false pretences. The arrest was made at the instigation of several British importers, to whom Rudd presented himself as the representative of two or three Oriental firms. He was successful in obtaining several hundred pounds.'

"The fellow came to see me," continued Colgan gleefully, "a little, fat, bald-headed man that you never would have suspected of fraud, but I wasn't satisfied with his credentials. He told me a long yarn about his going to the Spanish court, which made me suspicious. I heard yesterday that he had stayed in this very hotel two or three days. Strange I never saw him."

As he rose from the table, Colgan turned towards his daughter. Electra had fallen backwards in a dead faint.

LOST AND FOUND.

Their heads were close together;
Neither seemed to mind the weather,
Nor the mischief in the caddie's roguish winks.
They knew they hadn't dined,
Yet they still stayed on to find
The links which he had lost upon the links.

She didn't seem to worry
When he kissed her, saying, "Sorry.
But I think we've looked in all the likely chinks."
And they stayed a little longer,
For they'd found a link much stronger
Than the links which he had lost upon the links.

H. P. Wells.

MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Once Read, Read Always.

THINGS OF GOOD REPORT.

With your permission, regular subscribers, I will quote—from memory, let me add, to dig myself in against the careful who verify quotations—the words of A. E. Housman in "A Shropshire Lad":

> And since till girls go maying
> You find the primrose still,
> And find the wind-flower playing
> With every wind at will,
> But not the daffodil,
>
> Take baskets now, and sally
> Upon the Spring's array,
> And bear from hill and valley
> The daffodil away,
> That dies on Easter Day.

The moral of these lines is clear. Do not put off picking your daffodils till others have left you none to pick. It applies also to other matters.

On October the seventh appear two comely volumes of Pearson's Star Library, price 2d. each, each volume embodying a complete novel and two popular songs. One is "A Girl's Good Name, by C. Malcolm Hincks, and the other "Her Sin of Silence," by Winifred Graham.

On October 14th appears "Pearson's Merry Annual," a feast of wild mirth and revelry, copiously illustrated in colour, the best ever, price 1s.

In the October Pearson's Magazine Captain Kettle reappears, on the warpath this time, under forced draught, with his safety valves screwed down.

Remember the daffodils, and get them all early.

Of course, I *could* have quoted the early bird and the early worm, but the simile of the daffodils appeals to me as more ethereal and less earthly, especially in these days when we are instructed to eat less meat. Why be vegetarian in diet alone?

MY CORRESPONDENCE.

One forms one's habits. My letters are sorted invariably into two heaps; on one hand the sturdy, blunt, business-like looking stuff, on the other the dainty, delicate, soft-hued, scented missives, joyful in their hand-made paper and monogramed sealing-wax. One divides the post, I say, into two categories—the mail, and the female so to speak.

From the more ornamental section I have culled lately a letter, a passage of which deserves to be printed in gold and hung up by Mr. Lloyd-George in the room where he keeps his "Push and Go" men, as an example and a watchword. Here is the passage:

> I beg to submit the enclosed verses to your notice. If they are considered favourably, I can send you more; if unfavourably, I am afraid I shall still send you more.

It is the spirit of the Allies, and more cannot be said. But spirit is not enough in this life; tact also is necessary. The tact was there too, in the concluding portion of the letter, just where tact ought to be. Here is the conclusion:

> I shall consider your judgment an Olympian decree.

Go on and prosper, wonderful girl—"*Ubique; Quo Fas et Gloria Ducunt*," as the Artillery put it.

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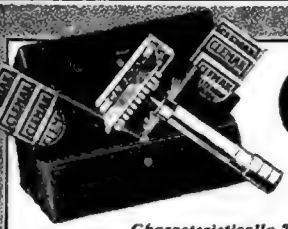

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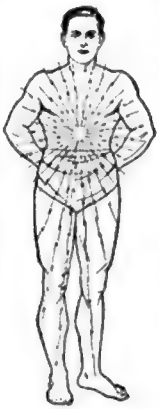

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Shoots Shot, Darts and Bolts.

1,000 Shot, Lever Action, 10/6. 500 Shot, ditto, 7/6.
Single Shot, 3/6.

BE SURE IT'S A "KING." Sole Importers—

MARKT & Co. (London), Ltd., 98-100 Clerkenwell Rd., E.C.

Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste.

A British Production.

Children love to use it.

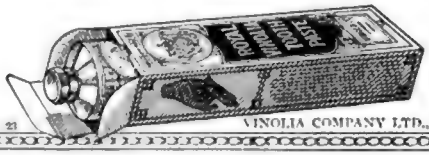
SOUND teeth are essential to perfect Health. Start the children early on the road to Health by teaching them to care for their teeth.

Give them Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste. They are eager to use it, and by reason of its mild antiseptic qualities it is invaluable for preserving the teeth, and it keeps the mouth in a healthy condition. Royal Vinolia Tooth Paste is equally good for your own teeth. Preserve and beautify them by its regular use. You will find it delightfully refreshing.

In Tubes 6d. and 10½d.

Those who prefer a Tooth Powder will find ***Royal Vinolia Tooth Powder*** *very efficacious.*

In Tins **7½d.** *and* **1/-**



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VINOLIA COMPANY LTD., LONDON—PARIS.

Nervy and Sleepless

Business Man's Splendid Cure by Dr. Cassell's Tablets.

Mr. Poole, Sheffield.

Mr. Poole, a business man, of 60 Infirmary Road, Sheffield, says: "Dr. Cassell's Tablets have simply worked wonders in me. I had become so excessively nervous and run-down that I would jump at a sound. I had lost confidence in myself, and the alertness and business activity I had formerly possessed were gone. My digestion was very feeble, often there was pain and wind, and at night I used to wake up with a start and a queer feeling of dread. This had gone on for months. I was getting more and more run-down, when one day I read of similar cases cured by Dr. Cassell's Tablets. I got some, and almost at once I felt better. Naturally, I persevered, and now I am as well and fit as any man of my age."

Dr. Cassell's Tablets

"Dr. Cassell's Tablets are a genuine and tested remedy for all forms of nerve or bodily weakness in old or young. Compounded of nerve nutrients and tonics of indisputably proved efficacy, they are the recognised modern treatment for—

NERVOUS BREAKDOWN	NEURASTHENIA	KIDNEY DISEASE	WASTING DISEASES
NERVE PARALYSIS	NERVOUS DEBILITY	INDIGESTION	PALPITATION
SPINAL PARALYSIS	SLEEPLESSNESS	STOMACH DISORDER	PREMATURE DECAY
INFANTILE PARALYSIS	ANÆMIA	MALNUTRITION	LOSS OF FLESH

Specially valuable for Nursing Mothers and during the Critical Periods of Life.

Sold by Chemists and Stores in all parts of the world, including leading Chemists in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Africa, and India. Price 1/3d., 1/11, and 2/9—the 2/9 size being the more economical.

FREE TRIAL SUPPLY

Sent on receipt of name and address and a penny stamp for postage & packing. Apply Dr. Cassell's Co. Ltd. (Box A640) Chester Rd., Manchester.

SULPHOLINE

This famous lotion quickly removes Skin Eruptions, promoting a clear complexion. The slightest rash, ferment spot, irritating pimples, disfiguring blotches, obstinate eczema, disappear by applying SULPHOLINE, which renders the skin spotless, soft, clear, supple, comfortable. For 47 years it has been the remedy for

Eruptions	Roughness	Acne
Pimples	Pustles	Blotches
Redness	Eczema	Spots
Psoriasis	Scurf	Rosea

Sulpholine is prepared by the great Skin Specialists, J. PEPPER & Co. Ltd., 7 Bedford Laboratories, London, N.W., and is sold in bottles at 1/- and 2/9. It can be obtained direct from them by post or from any Chemist and Stores throughout the world.

Quickly removes the effects of Sunburn.

DON'T LOOK OLD!

Get restore your grey and faded hairs to their natural colour with LOCKYER'S SULPHUR

HAIR RESTORER

1/6 Sold Everywhere. 1/6

Lockyer's restores the natural colour, promotes the growth, and makes the most perfect Hair Dressing. Procurable at Chemists & Stores. 7 Bedford Laboratories, London, S.E., and obtainable by post or from Chemists & Stores throughout the World.

Exterminated by "LIVERPOOL" VIRUS

RATS

Per Kangaroo to Australia. NO SMELL.

In Tins lasted for Rats 2/6 and 6/- for Mice 1/6.

EVANS SONS LESCHER & WEBB Ltd., 56 Hanover Street, LIVERPOOL.

The Bugle Blast,
They heed alright,
They fall in fast,
AND take Fluxite.

There are a hundred and one jobs more easily done with

FLUXITE

At the war and at Home it is used for soldering by both Amateurs and Mechanics. Economy is necessary. YOU can repair your pots and pans and other metal articles with Fluxite because it

SIMPLIFIES SOLDERING

Of Ironmongers in 6d., 1/- and 2/- tins.

THE "FLUXITE" **SOLDERING SET**

contains a special "small [illegible] Iron, a Pocket Blow-lamp, Fluxite, Solder, etc.

Price 4/6. Sample Set post paid United Kingdom 4/10.

AUTO-CONTROLLER CO., 306 Vicars Rd., Bournemouth, Eng.

Royal Vinolia Cream

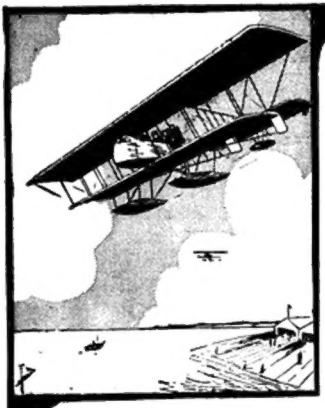
What is good for me is good for Dolly too.

HOW often the child's habits are fashioned on those of the mother. It is good to encourage the child in the little attentions to the toilet which help to keep the complexion perfect. Happy the mother who knows the value of ROYAL VINOLIA CREAM. It keeps the skin cool, healthy, clear, and free from irritation. It is very gentle and safe in action. It preserves that smoothness, softness and charm of complexion which the child possesses. ROYAL VINOLIA CREAM contains wonderful soothing and healing properties and is unequalled for redness, roughness, eczema, abrasions and all skin troubles.

***ROYAL VINOLIA CREAM SOAP** is made of the choicest materials and, in addition, contains all the active ingredients of the Cream. It is specially soothing for tender and delicate skins and the most delightful soap to use for the Nursery Toilet.*

ROYAL VINOLIA CREAM
1½d., 1/7, 3/2, 5/5
per Box.
VINOLIA CO. LTD.,

ROYAL VINOLIA CREAM SOAP
1/- per Box of 3 Tablets.
LONDON & PARIS.
RV 111—B



The HENRY FARMAN SEAPLANE is a biplane of the pusher type, that is to say the propeller pushes the machine from behind the main planes. It has been evolved by Henry Farman, one of the first Europeans to fly. The engine is an 80-h.p. Gnome and the whole machine is so reliable as to have earned the nickname, "The mechanical cow." The pilot and passenger have comfortable quarters in a NACELLE which is built out from the front of the machine.

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT CIGARETTES

HAVE A WORLD-WIDE REPUTATION

They are made from fine quality Virginia Tobacco and are sold in two strengths:

GOLD LEAF.
100 for 3/-; 50 for 1/6

MEDIUM.
100 for 2/3; 50 for 1/1½

PLAYER'S NAVY CUT DE LUXE

Is a development of the ORIGINAL PLAYER'S NAVY CUT.

Player's Navy Cut De Luxe is the outcome of many years' experience and is probably the best Pipe Tobacco yet offered to the public. It is perfectly accurate to describe it as being manufactured from not only the best growths of Virginia but from the selected leaves of those best growths.

Packed only in 2-oz. and 4-oz. Airtight Tins at 1/2 and 2/4 respectively.

For Wounded British Soldiers and Sailors in Military Hospitals at Home and for the Front at Duty Free Rates.

Terms on application to
John Player & Sons, Nottingham

Issued by the Imperial Tobacco Co. (of Gt. Britain & Ireland), Ltd.

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THIS MONTH'S TOILET HINTS.

THE LATEST AND SMARTEST BEAUTY RECIPES COLLECTED FROM VARIOUS EXPERT BEAUTY WRITERS.

A "Blackhead" Secret.

An instantaneous remedy for blackheads, oily skin, and enlarged pores.

Blackheads, oily skins and enlarged pores usually go together, but can be instantly corrected by a unique new process. A tablet of stymol, obtained from the chemist, is dropped in a tumbler of hot water which will then of course "fizz" briskly. When the effervescence has subsided the face is bathed with the stymol-charged water and then dried with a towel. The offending blackheads, of their own accord, come right off on the towel, the large oily pores immediately contract and efface themselves naturally. There is no squeezing, forcing or any drastic action The skin is left uninjured, smooth, soft, and cool. A few such treatments should be taken at intervals of three or four days thereafter in order to ensure the permanence of the pleasing result so quickly obtained.

Grey Hair—Home Remedy.

An old-fashioned home-made recipe restores youthful appearance.

There are plenty of reasons why grey hair is not desirable and plenty of reasons why hair dyes should not be used. But, on the other hand, there is no reason why you should have grey hair if you do not want it. To turn the hair back to a natural colour is really a very simple matter. One has only to get from the chemist an ounce of concentrate of tammalite and mix it with four ounces of bay rum. Apply to the hair with a small sponge for a few nights and the greyness will gradually disappear. This liquid is not sticky or greasy and does not injure the hair in any way. It has been used for generations with most satisfactory results by those who have known the formula.

To Kill Roots of Superfluous Hair.

"Home Science."

Women annoyed with disfiguring growths of superfluous hair wish to know not merely how to temporarily remove the hair, but how to kill the hair roots permanently. For this purpose pure powdered pheminol may be applied directly to the objectionable hair growth. The recommended treatment is designed not only to instantly remove the hair but also to actually kill the roots so that the growth will not return. About an ounce of pheminol, obtainable from the chemist, should be sufficient.

The Real Cause of Most Bad Complexions.

"Health and Beauty."

It is an accepted fact that no truly beautiful complexion ever came out of jars and bottles, and the longer one uses cosmetics the worse the complexion becomes. Skin, to be healthy, must breathe. It also must expel, through the pores, its share of the body's effete material. Creams and powders clog the pores, interfering both with elimination and breathing. If more women understood this there would be fewer self-ruined complexions. If they would use ordinary mercolised wax instead of cosmetics they would have natural healthy complexions.

About Hair Tonics.

"Novel Recipes."

Each week almost one hears of some wonderful discovery for improving the hair, and although this paragraph may seem a little superfluous, an old-fashioned recipe may come as a welcome change. One thing about it is that it will grow hair, and also prevent it falling out. From your chemist get an original package of boranium, to this add ½-pint of bay rum, allow it to stand 30 minutes, then add sufficient water to make half-a-pint. Rub briskly into the scalp with the finger-tips and you will immediately experience that clean tingling sensation which is a sure sign of healthy action.

PARKER BELMONT'S CLYNOL BERRIES FOR OBESITY.—[ADVT.]

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Explaining 'Feminine Charm.'

By MILLICENT BROWN.

Illustrated by PENRHYN STANLAWS.

I NOTICED a curious thing recently in a railway train. A nicely dressed woman entered and took a seat beside me. I saw that everyone was looking at her—staring, in fact. But not offensively, you understand. I caught myself doing the same thing. It was impossible to help it. Certainly it was not her beauty of feature that held the eyes of all, nor was it her costume. But there was something about her face and expression—I risked it, and spoke. "Would you mind telling me," I said, "*how* you keep your complexion so dazzingly pure? You won't think me impertinent, but you seem to be over thirty, aren't you? And yet you havn't a line in your face, and your cheeks are quite peach-like. Do tell me how you do it." She laughed quite good-naturedly. "Oh, that's very easy!" she said. "I remove my skin." "You *what?*" I exclaimed, horrified.

Again she laughed, and replied: "Sounds shocking, doesn't it? But I will explain. Instead of using face creams, I use only pure mercolized wax, procurable at any chemist's. The wax has a gentle absorbent action which takes up and *removes* the soiled and weather-beaten outer film-skin, without pain, irritation, or discomfort, thus revealing the real complexion fresh and clear underneath. Every woman has a beautiful complexion *underneath*, you know. Then, to keep my face firm, and free from wrinkles, I merely use good parsidium occasionally, rubbing it on like face cream and then rinsing it off in a few minutes. It is a harmless astringent, and 'tones' the skin wonderfully. Very simple, isn't it?" I thought it was. I am now trying her plan, and like it immensely.

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BROWN'S BARLEY KERNELS make a Happy Family.

MOTHER knows a 4d. Box will make 10 Puddings.
SISTER knows it is good for the Skin and Complexion.
FATHER knows it Prevents Kidney Trouble.
THE BOYS know it is ever so much nicer than Rice.
And they ALL know it makes the very Best Barley Water obtainable.

Brown's Barley Kernels not only make Delicious Creamy Puddings without the aid of Eggs but also make the Purest Barley Water obtainable with the least amount of trouble. Simply pour boiling water on Brown's Barley Kernels, stand and allow to cool. :: :: :: :: :: Nothing better. Nothing easier.

Miniature facsimile of Box.

Brown's Barley Kernels differ both in kind and quality from any preparation of Barley on the market. Sold only in Branded Boxes, 4d., by Grocers, Stores, etc.

W. & G. BROWN, CEREAL FOOD SPECIALISTS, DERBY.

BIRD'S Custard has the taste you ALL enjoy!

It is an altogether-good taste—a combination of freshness, niceness, purity and wholesomeness.

The liking for BIRD'S Custard needs no cultivating! It comes naturally even to young children.

Grown-up folk also thoroughly relish the BIRD'S Custard flavor. Hearty men who never eat sweets, etc., retain their boyish eagerness for

Bird's the Perfect Custard

In Pkts. 2 for 1½d.; 4d. & 7½d. Boxes. large Tins.

Cow.

by GEORGE BINNEY DIBBLEE, Windsor House, Bream's Buildings, E.C., and Published by C. ARTHUR PEARSON LTD., Henrietta Street, London, W.C.
All Advertisements to be addressed to the Advertisement Department, 17 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

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